

Lan Wangji's Prank

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/29513982) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/29513982>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	魔道祖师 Módào Zǔshī (Cartoon) , 魔道祖师 - 墨香铜臭 Módào Zǔshī - Mòxiāng Tóngxiù , 陈情令 The Untamed (TV)
Relationship:	Lan Zhan Lan Wangji/Wei Ying , Wei Wuxian
Characters:	Lan Zhan , Lan Wangji , Wei Ying , Wei Wuxian , Lan Huan , Lan Xichen , Jiang Cheng , Jiang Wanyin , Jiang Yanli , Jin Zixuan , Luo "Mian Mian" Qingyang
Additional Tags:	Fluff , Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence , Alternate Universe - Time Travel , Fix-It , Alternate Universe - Everyone Lives/Nobody Dies , Mutual Pining , Golden Core Reveal (Modao Zushi) , Yiling Laozu Wei Ying , Wei Wuxian , and he is soft , LWJ's boundless patience , First Kiss , First Time , Tender Sex , Feel-good , time travel is secondary to everything else , slightly steamy sex at the end , Love Confessions , Lan Zhan , Lan Wangji/Wei Ying , Wei Wuxian Get a Happy Ending , Stand Alone
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of All the different ways we found each other
Collections:	THE UNTAMED Time Travel Fixit , Disfrutemos de la perfección , Books Read - Completed (GMODC)
Stats:	Published: 2021-02-17 Completed: 2021-05-26 Words: 23,528 Chapters: 7/7

Lan Wangji's Prank

by [shiroakuma](#)

Summary

"Wei Ying..." he said. 'I know about your golden core,' was the first thought in his tired mind followed by, 'I missed you,' then, 'I am worried about your health because of the resentful energy,' and finally, 'Come to Gusu with me to heal and rest.' All these would end in an argument and he feared that ordeal more than he feared facing the risk of losing his life or his own golden core. He focused.

Wangji reached into the part of his mind guarding his most precious, protected secret and desired it to be brought forward. He willed it to pass through his dry lips, "Wei Ying, I wish to court you."

Lan Wangji is thrown back in time to when Wei Wuxian kills Wen Chao and Wen Zhuliu. Instead of worrying over the big picture, his first line of action is to confess to his love. When that fails to be understood, he tries another way to be heard.

Notes

It is mainly a short, feel good story. Time travel is not the main point of it and it focuses on LWJ and WWX dancing around each other. It is touched upon briefly. Sex comes second and is at the very end of chapter 3 if you want to pass it up. Also, the newly added 7th chapter is pure smut.; just a heads up.

It mainly follows the donghua as the opening act occurs in Chongyang when WWX unleashes hell on Wen Chao and saves LWJ and JC.

It's not directly related to the 'A Torn Red Ribbon' and as a stand-alone, it works off of a similar concept. This storyline is one of the paths I thought about adding to the main story but it did not work, so instead of scrapping it, I sculpted it into a short fic (you know, instead of writing the other fic that's still going on hot).

Side Note: LWJ POV is now added. It will be another 3-parts story.

The Deal

Green flames overtook the bright orange of the fire that had spread across their fort in Chongyang. A murder of crows circled above them. A high-pitched piercing sound of dizi scratched at their ears. There was blood in Lan Wangji's mouth and sense of dread that grew in his heart.

They were on their knees; Lan Wangji and Jiang Wanyin. They were swarmed by Wen cultivators and Wen Chao was smirking with his victory up until he wasn't. The dead walked among them. The corpses wore the faces of the Wen, Jiang and Lan cultivators and they delved into the mass of the living tearing and killing their enemies. Wen Chao ran for as long as he could. Wen Zhuliu fought twice as long. It mattered not at the end. A swirl of resentful energy rose from the dead and the dying on the battlefield and the man in black and red swiped his arm in a single motion to remove Wen Zhuliu's golden core. Their enemies died screaming.

All was settled as quickly as it began. Wen Chao's dead eyes stared at Wangji but his attention was solely on the man who had been missing for three months.

The location was different. The method was much more aggressive than Wangji remembered it being. The people involved were much the same but the green flames were new. He still recognised the scene. Previously, Wangji and Jiang Wanyin had found Wei Ying in the courier station as he was hunting down the men who had harmed his sect. They had confronted him and their budding bond had suffered through all the lies and the rejection. This time Wei Ying had saved them from certain death in Chongyang. He crashed into the battle scene like a wave made up of daggers and sliced and cut through the enemies with the ease of a seasoned general commanding the dead, bending them to his will and making them rip apart their own masters.

It was equal parts terrifying, worrisome and enticing.

"Wei Ying."

"Lan Zhan?"

Wangji knew the direction of their conversation. He remembered vividly how little it took to break the tangible bond that never got to grow deeper. This was a point in time that he regretted not trying to understand Wei Ying. His words had been curt. He had spoken rashly without given a chance for his zhijie to explain himself. Even if it were never his intention, Wangji should not have made him believe his sole purpose as a GusuLan disciple was to hand Wei Ying over to his sect and wash his hands clean of the demonic cultivator.

The compassion shown in trying times saved more than just lives, he recalled. He had no wish to repeat his past mistakes. But he would never reign in himself from speaking his true thoughts and the truth either. He would just be more considerate about it all.

When their eyes met, Wangji allowed his posture to relax and his eyes to soften. He reached deep in his heart and pulled out the emotions he had been keeping under lock.

"It's good to see you unharmed, Wei Ying."

"Oh..." Wei Ying was not expecting that. Wangji couldn't blame him; the first time around his reaction had been less kind, bordering on hostile.

"I had feared," he began, forcing all the words out that he had denied himself before, "you died." He had not heard his voice crack like this since childhood. Hopefully, they did not notice it.

"Not dead," Wei Ying replied, "I'm here aren't I?"

"Mn. Fortunately." He bit into his lips unable to move past what he just had heard, "Wen Chao said you were-"

"Hm?"

Jiang Wanyin took over, "He said that he threw you into the Burial Mounds. Obviously, he lied as you are standing here, all fine. Heh. Good job on offing him." He stepped forward and laid a comforting hand over Wei Ying's shoulder. Wangji wished he could do the same.

"Ah. Good riddance. Wen Chao had it coming for a long time." Wei Ying completely evaded his claims about the Burial Mounds. Had it been his younger mind, Wangji would be more concerned with other aspects of this nightmare Wei Ying inflicted upon the living but now, as he knew the truth behind it all, he noted it down. He also recognised the Wei Ying's lying tells; a nervous humming, the half pull of his lips into a smirk, running his fingers down Chenqing's dark shaft and the short nervous stutter before answering. He saw it all. He understood his hidden reasons and the untrusting edge of his actions. With this revelation, his heart broke for his beloved.

Wangji forced down the urge to call him out on it. Instead, he asked, "Are you injured?"

"You are the one bleeding, Lan Zhan." He pointed the tip of his dizi at Wangji's cut fingers. "I should direct you that question."

The cuts did not hurt. The strings on *Wangji* had snapped and that was the real shame. "*Wangji*'s strings will need fixing."

"Huh?" At their obvious confusion, he gestured at his guqin. "Ah! Yeah, that makes more sense."

"Your dizi. What is it called?" He pretended not to know the answer.

Wei Ying tapped the dizi against his palm and twirled it between deft fingers. "You like it, Lan Zhan? It's called Chenqing! I wasn't sure you'd appreciate it or what it can do." The ease with which they spoke was like wine quenching his long-forgotten thirst. Despite the ghastliness around them, he allowed himself to get drunk on it. Allowed himself to hope as he nodded.

"Wei Ying, a moment alone?"

Jiang Wanyin excused himself to search for any Wen strugglers or Jiang survivors as Wei Ying agreed.

They were okay, Wangji reminded himself. In the lack of a rash opposition about his cultivation from him (despite the nagging feeling of uncertainty), Wei Ying was amenable. He even flashed him a toothy grin and with an assured display of power, he laid his corpses to rest. His new cultivation and strong aura were both extraordinary. Even with all that he knew, Wangji was astonished at the sheer amount of resentful energy he controlled. Wei Ying, this time around, appeared to be stronger than ever before.

I didn't fall for you because of your abilities. You do not need to impress me; I already am. These he could have said but even he knew these were not sentences that encompassed his feelings nor could he confess with such imperfect wording.

"What are you looking at?" Wei Ying asked with an amused tone as they walked to a secluded area, devoid of bodies. "See something you like, Hanguang-jun?" How could one eloquently put into words that the bared chest and the wild, loose hair of the man his heart ached for made his pulse quicken and his trousers unbelievably tight? Wangji could not even think of the words to describe it let alone know how to voice them.

More than anything else though, he wished for Wei Ying to be aware of his feelings. He wasted so much time last time. They had ached so needlessly.

"Lan Zhan?" Wei Ying fidgeted. The silence was grating at his nerves. His clasped his fists tightly while his face remained relaxed though Wangji noted the slight, expectant twitch of his eyebrow. He was clearly readying himself for a fight.

"Wei Ying..." he said. 'I know about your golden core,' was the first thought in his tired mind followed by, 'I missed you,' then, 'I am worried about your health because of the resentful energy,' and finally, 'Come to Gusu with me to heal and rest.' All these would end in an argument and he feared that ordeal more than he feared facing the risk of losing his life or his own golden core. He focused.

Wangji reached into the part of his mind guarding his most precious, protected secret and desired it to be brought forward. He willed it to pass through his dry lips, "Wei Ying, I wish to court you."

Silence. Deep, confused void. Had there been crickets around them, even they would not sing with the fear of breaking the awkwardness seeping from them. Flies would be too ashamed to buzz about. Wei Ying looked at him like he misheard his words. As if Wangji had grown a second head. Then he threw his head back and roared out a burst of tremendous laughter. His whole body shook. He doubled over and clutched at his stomach in the effort to keep himself from falling over. Wangji urged himself not to take it personally.

"So good, Lan Zhan. For a second, I thought you were serious. Oh, boy. That felt good. I hadn't laughed like that in months! Thank you. Really." Wei Ying patted Wangji's forearm

affectionately. His crimson eyes had returned to their beautiful silvery tones and they sparkled with joy. "Well played, Lan-er-gege, well played, indeed."

Wangji sent him a flat look which went unnoticed because Wei Ying was still too busy covering his mouth and trying to surpass his giggles. He inhaled. Reciting the entire run of the GusuLan Sect rules would not be enough to settle the thumping of his heart or get rid of the reddening ears of his.

"It's a good prank to pull given the limited resources and all! I'll have to pull it on Jiang Cheng, too!" He wanted to kiss the smirk off of those red lips still stretched widely but as Wangji had learned later in life, two could play a game. And, Wangji was an eager participant.

"Good idea," he encouraged. "Present him my name as your betrothed."

Wei Ying made a confused sound at the back of his throat. "No way would he believe that, Lan Zhan!"

"I'll play along."

"You will?!"

"Mn. I'll start with xiongzhang. If he believes, so will Jiang-zongzhu."

"Oh, are you honestly willing to go that far? Wait, wait! Do you mean it like a competition? Want to see which one of us can convince more people? I won't lose to you. Wait until I pull the prank on my Shijie, too! Our score will be two to two."

"Shufu, then." Though it may send him into a qi deviation. However, he would learn of it eventually, might as well Wangji break it to him gently.

"I claim Nie Huaisang!" Wei Ying countered excitedly.

"Nie Mingjue will believe my word."

"Jin Zixuan!"

"Luo Qingyang."

"Who?" Wei Ying asked and Wangji reminded him that she was 'Mianmian.' "Cheeky, Lan Zhan. Do you like her after all?"

Wangji glared at him. This incorrigible topic had to burn into nothingness at some point. "Jin Guangshan."

"Huh?! You can't. What about your reputation, Lan Zhan?"

"Sec Leader Ouyang."

"You wouldn't!"

"Sect Leader Yao."

"Hanguang-jun you'll get ostracized if you joke around with those kinds of people!"

Wangji straightened his posture. His gaze was unwavering. "Sounds like I'm winning."

"Hey, no fair!" Completely riled up, Wei Ying yelled, "All of YunmengJiang Sect!"

"GusuLan Sect disciples."

"You! Fine, I'll find more people. You'll see!"

He stepped into Wei Ying's personal space who remained unbothered with only Chenqing tapping against his chest with unruly energy. He grasped his hand careful not to touch the dizi. His attention was captured by the bobbing in Wei Ying's throat and descended briefly down to his bare collarbones. Chastising his wandering gaze, he entertained his previous idea of capturing those parted lips but gave up on it in pursuit of a better moment than one spent amidst a battleground. "By tomorrow sunset."

"Yeah, we'll see who wins." The sentence was more breathed out than spoken out. The warmth of it caressed Wangji's lips; a tempting precursor to a wild dream and a lover's kiss. To chase it would have been realizing a wish denied to him for far too long. The weight of its meaning would unburden the heaviness in Wangji's own heart.

It was Wangji who took a step backwards. At the same time, Wei Ying blinked rapidly as if woken up from sleep and copied his movements. They managed to croak out an agreement of sorts. They would not reveal the prank as a prank until much later on in case it spread amongst the cultivators too rapidly until it became a certainty who the winner was. While Wangji never used the word prank or anything in close proximity to it, he nodded at Wei Ying's rules and accepted the challenge gracefully. He hoped that at some point during tomorrow his dearest would come to realize both their feelings. If not, he would just have to be patient as he had been before.

The next day after the battle in Chongyang, they had some free time to recover from their wounds and readjust their plans with the presence of his new army of the dead. Hence they were to spend time in the large base where most of the sect leaders had gathered. In the downtime they had been given, he'd be able to gain headway in the competition.

Somehow, to Wei Wuxian's surprise and confusion, he was winning. Though the confusing part pressed more heavily in his head than the surprising bit. Per their earlier agreement, Lan Xichen had been told first in the night, by them both. Then, by breakfast, he had begun his excursions around the tents. Yet, no one responded to him the way they should have. Worse off, no one even questioned him about anything except about his cultivation. Surely, being betrothed to the esteemed Hanguang-jun would garner more attention, right? If not, then at least they would have told him off!

When told, Jiang Cheng rolled his eyes at him and muttered some curses under his breath. He left his side quickly to join a meeting and that was Wei Wuxian's first disappointment. Shijie congratulated him with such gusto that he would rather cut off his tongue than refute the claim or make vague implication to its questionable honesty. He should not have mentioned this to her. Now her gaze was full of gentleness and expectations. What had he done?

Nie Huaisang did one worse. He exclaimed aloud, "Finally!" before promising him the most extravagant wedding gift worthy of emperors. Additionally, behind his fan, he hinted at sending over some detailed cut-sleeve porn for him to study and enjoy in his free time. Wei Wuxian drank bottles of watered-down wine to rid himself of the reddest face he had ever sported.

Jin Zixuan provided the sole decent facial expression of revolt, questioning Wei Wuxian, with his dumb eyebrows doing that weird arching motion, why they were even talking at all. He did fall for it though. It was hilarious. The slackened jaw and the blush adorning his cheeks that mimicked the colour of his vermilion mark were both delightful things to see. Mianmian bounced over to them as the peacock attempted to force his face into something resembling a decent frown. She mentioned, rather happily that Lan Zhan had already informed her of this which added to the believability of his words. She then goaded Jin Zixuan for having given up the true catch of YunmengJiang Sect (which Wei Wuxian wholeheartedly agreed with). She was on a roll because she also praised both Lan Zhan and him for their bravery and romanticism for confessing to each other after months of separation. Wei Wuxian had not heard the details before but learning that Lan Zhan had been as relentless as Jiang Cheng in his search for him brought about a warmth in his guts that had him smiling. Their interaction topic of discussion did not go unnoticed. The entirety of the LanlingJin Sect troop around them let out gasps and surprised exclamation followed by curses. Each one of those had to count towards Wei Wuxian's score. So he counted them one by one and left the peacock to his lamenting.

His mostly newly recruited shidis and shimeis got all teary eyed. The little cheeks that had known him since their youth had the gall to ask for the blessings of the Heavens for the esteemed Hanguang-jun's continuous interest in him and thanked the Gods for such a good match amidst this terrible war. It was all very touching... Except for the small smiles and the impossible to hide giggles that hinted at less faith in his abilities to charm Lan Zhan and more doubt that he would be found suitable for the Second Jade of Lan. They did not outright deny his claims, though.

Perhaps no one wanted to upset him by tipping their hands early and admitting that they didn't believe a word he said because he had been missing for months and they were wary of his unknown cultivation. So, they played along and ruined his prank! How rude.

He consolidated himself with Jin Zixuan's dumb, fish-like expression. Some people had believed him. It'd still be the best prank he pulled on such a large scale. More surprisingly though, who knew Lan Zhan had it in him!?

Speaking of which; Lan Zhan was by Zewu-jun's side who had his genuine bright smile instead of the understanding but not so real one he often wore on the battlefield. He must be delighted to see his little brother living a little at long last!

"Zewu-jun! Lan Zhan!" he saluted them. He was enthusiastically greeted back. He winked at his partner in crime. "I've been busy spreading the good news this morning. Did you fare good, Lan Zhan?"

"It was met with much confusion," Zewu-jun replied when Lan Zhan simply nodded. "We all needed some joy in our lives, Wei-gongzi. It's wonderful news."

"Ah, just wait until tomorrow. It'll be even more joyous!"

"Hm?"

"But Lan Zhan I can't believe you beat me to Mianmian. She even gifted me some sweets. I wanted to tell her." True that he had claimed her first but it didn't stop Wei Wuxian from bullying him for it.

"Plenty of people remain," Lan Zhan responded.

"True enough." He swayed forward and he saddled right next to him. "You are quite the gentleman. I had claimed the peacock first and you left him for me. So considerate!"

"For Wei Ying, of course."

"Aiyo, stop. You'll make me blush." He rubbed their shoulders together and they swayed on the spot.

Zewu-jun cleared his throat rather forcefully from sidelines. "I'll excuse myself. I have a long list of details to discuss with Jiang-zongzhu."

"Is that so? He was on his way to the mess hall last I heard of him, grumbling to himself."

"Thank you, Wei-gongzi. Ah, I should call you Wuxian from now on; we'll be family after all. Please address me as Xichen-ge."

"Then, good day to you, Xichen-ge!" He chirped back. Though a sense of wrongness wrapped itself around his mind at the sudden familiarity, he chalked it up to being among too many people after too long.

"So glad, you came up with this idea, Lan Zhan. Tomorrow they'll be so surprised! Everyone is already having a blast. Heh, Nie-xiong offered me such gifts that they'll make your ears burn."

"Mn. We should-"

"What? Is it an even better plan?"

"Have lunch with me. In the mess hall."

Lunch? Oh, he wanted to keep up the act and solidify the prank! A brilliant idea popped into Wei Wuxian's head. Almost all of the sect's upper ranked cultivators ate in the mess hall. It

would be the best moment to steal them all from under Lan Zhan's nose in one swift move! Eyes twinkling with mischievousness reminiscent of his youth, he nodded.

A knowing smile, so small but accompanied with a hooded gaze, appeared on Lan Zhan's face. It spelt a race against time! Wei Wuxian would not loose!

The Game

Chapter Summary

Wei Wuxian comes to realize a number of things.

They arrived at the mess hall, side by side. Shoulders bumping, bodies unusually close and fingers rubbing against each other, they painted the picture of a young couple, far too eager to show off their new relationship. Lan Zhan's hand grazed his palm occasionally and his heart pumped loud in his ears. He was so excited! He had to win the crown! Since Lan Zhan had the advantage of the Lan silencing spell at his disposal, Wei Wuxian'd have to announce the betrothal before he thought of casting it on him.

In the hall, it was late enough that almost everyone around was present but not yet done with their meals. Perfect! People cast glances at them with various levels of confusion. It was most likely due to seeing someone as beautiful as the Hanguang-jun at his side, but Wei Wuxian wanted to believe it was because of their combined charm.

He dashed forward and climbed atop a low table. The nearby GusuLan disciple whimpered at his crude act and the poor man leaned backwards until he was well outside the range of the floundering limbs wrapped in dark extensive sleeves. With enough bravado to make anyone question his sanity, Wei Wuxian loudly interrupted the cultivators and announced his betrothal to the precious Second Jade of Lan and esteemed Hanguang-jun.

The nearby GusuLan disciple choked on nothing. Other disciples in white, paled as if imitating the colours of their robes and shakily faced Lan Zhan. Someone, annoyingly sounding similar to the peacock yelled back at him, "We get it already. Shut up about it!"

Lan Zhan, with a neutral expression, silently reached the low table he was on and offered a hand to help him climb down. He must have wanted to hammer in the effect because the moment his foot touched down on the ground, his arm was wrapped around Wei Wuxian's waist. Which was okay? Like it was working really well and all, seeing how the simple act had him blushing madly. But... He was meant to be the shameless one, wasn't he? How dare you, Lan Wangji! Wei Wuxian was never one to be beaten at being shameless or shy away from a challenge so he snuggled even closer to the solidly built man holding him securely. If someone from GusuLan disciples fainted, that was hardly on him though. Lan Zhan had started it.

Jiang Cheng strolled over to them. Well, more like stomped over. A yell was at the tip of his tongue, though he held back, wanting to keep their face a little less shamed. He spoke in a very sect leader like manner and asked Lan Zhan to step away from his head disciple. Then, when Lan Zhan refused with a curt nod and a tightened hold that travelled up to Wei Wuxian's chest, his dear shidi threatened to punish Wei Wuxian by forbidding him from

seeing Lan Zhan if he did not shut up and split apart this instance; you know, like some unruly child. Naturally, he stuck his tongue out at his shidi. He grabbed his dearest Lan Zhan by the arm and leaned his head over the broad shoulder, testing the seething man's limits.

Add to that was Lan Zhan who caught on quick and positioned himself securely by his side. And the next bit was solely on him but honestly, at Lan Zhan's adorable posturing, Wei Wuxian could not help but peck the beautiful man on the cheek.

"WEI WUXIAN!" He felt the vibrations of Jiang Cheng's yell. The whole mess hall did. The tent foundation rattled with the charged air. Sparks flew around them. And having seen Zidian be unleashed from its dormant form, he hid behind Lan Zhan, giggling all the time.

The previously choking GusuLan disciple let out a dying screech. Amidst the head shakes, loud gasps, threats to his manhood and even some sniffing (mostly by GusuLan disciples), he leaned forward until his chest was flush with Lan Zhan's back and whispered directly into his ear.

"We are so good at this, er-gege! Yet, do you think, we can do better?" he leered. Lan Zhan hummed. From up close, the red tinge of the man's ears was unmistakable. "There'll be no doubt in their minds now. If Hanguang-jun is not scolding me for my brazen behaviour, no way it's not real!" He clutched at the front of the white robes from behind, inadvertently feeling the taut muscles. Really even he blushed at his own unabashed act. When he attempted to remove his hand, however, Lan Zhan grabbed it with an almost invisible smirk. His hand rested atop Wei Wuxian's, caressing the soft skin of his wrist. A vein popped in Jiang Cheng's forehead. Oh, this was so much fun. In comparison to the death glare sent by his shidi, Lan Zhan's gaze was soft and alluring. Wei Wuxian almost forgot where they were.

The crackling of Zidian would scare others away but it was no sweat to either of them. Mostly. After all, the purple lightning was never going to be a pleasant view to Wei Wuxian. An angry Jiang Wanyin about to snap and whip them both? Even less so. "I don't recall giving my blessings, yet, Lan Wangji! Take your hands off of my brother, now!"

Lan Zhan refused him with a resolute, "No."

"You!"

In a flash, blue, regal robes fluttered around them. Zewu-jun descended upon the middle of the hall and he caught Jiang Cheng's arched arm, patting his forearm until Zidian retracted back into its ring form. "Shall we have our meal in my tent, Jiang-zongzhu? There are urgent matters that need our combined attention."

"Are these urgent matters related to these two?" His dear shidi gritted out and Wei Wuxian bent his knees until he was fully hidden behind Lan Zhan's back.

"We shall take our lunch in my tent as well, xiongzhang. We do not wish to disrupt anyone." A bit too late for that!

"The hell you are, Lan Wangji!"

"Ah haha, they'll be eating here of course. Jin-gongzi?" Zewu-jun interrupted. Peacock peaked from behind Mianmian with wide eyes. They screamed with agony at having been pinned by Sect Leader Lan who he could not be denied anything should he ask. "Would you mind...?" The peacock's gaze followed Zewu-jun's direction towards his little brother. Then, towards the crowded tables. His question was clear.

The peacock nodded dejectedly while Mianmian smirked from his side and bowed to Zewu-jun, "It'll be our pleasure, Lan-zongzhu."

"Much appreciated."

While Wei Wuxian waited as Jiang Cheng was ushered out of the mess hall and the Jin sect heir made a show of opening a space for them in some tables, Lan Zhan's arm went around his waist once more. Wei Wuxian squirmed a bit; Unused to this level of intimacy from the jade-like man. Yet, he had to admit that the solid weight of Lan Zhan's strong grip had melted away the anxiety that reared its head upon hearing the sparks of Zidian flying. Who knew?

Some LanlingJin disciples made retching noises as they moved through the mess but Lan Zhan's icy glare combined with several well-placed silencing spells from GusuLan disciples were enough to have anyone cower and keep them from attempting to do more.

"You'll sit by me, right, Lan-er-gege?" he asked innocently as some of the white-clad cultivators cleared the tables closest to Jin Zixuan. His companion silently obliged. They chose a spot in between the two sects. Had his shidis and shimeis not left with Jiang Cheng, he would have loved to sit by them, too.

Lan Zhan looked regal as he sat with a straight posture. Everything about his clothing was immaculate. All but one tiny detail. He swiped back a strand of Lan Zhan's hair that had bent around the outer robes. His fingers grazed the soft skin of his neck. And if he was slow to move his hand back, it was only because he wanted to ensure Lan Zhan looking his perfect self.

"Could you not?" Jin Zixuan complained but there was no heat behind his attitude. He sounded resigned. Almost annoyed but not quite. Wei Wuxian wondered why he was even in the mess hall eating with all the lower ranks when he caught sight of a familiar soup on his table. On all their tables. That explained it. And, he was looking forward to his own bowl.

Per GusuLan rules, Lan Zhan mostly ate in silence. Despite the tasty meal, Wei Wuxian's appetite wasn't much as it hadn't been for a long while. Though he did his best to eat what was given to him. Thankfully, his wine glass was never left empty. They had good company, too. Mianmian needed Wei Wuxian for details about their get together which he answered honestly (as honest as it got) and the peacock made several annoyed faces at them.

"I can't believe you confessed right after a bloody battle. Even Wei Wuxian would have shown the foresight to wait until you wore clean clothes and weren't surrounded by dead bodies... I think. Not sure anymore..."

"No, you are right, Peacock. Ehm... I mean, Jin-gongzi. It came out of nowhere!" Wei Wuxian thought back on it. "There I am, a dead troop of Wen cultivators around, tension still

high, grasping Chenqing tightly and expecting a full-on brawl. Yelling and stuff. Then, bam. 'I wish to court you' is what I hear. I thought he had been possessed, you know!"

Intrigued, the peacock looked over at them both, "Yeah, sounds like it."

"It's romantic!" Mianmian interjected, "He couldn't waste another moment apart from you, Wei-gongzi. You had been gone for so long, we all thought you wouldn't return. How sad must he have felt? Right, Hanguang-jun?"

Having finished his meal and nursing his tea, Lan Zhan startled at the mention of his title. He shyly nodded, "Mn."

"Lan Zhan, ah, Lan Zhan." Wei Wuxian did not think as he reached out and intervened their fingers. The tenseness in their bodies melted away. His touch was so warm. "Thank you for searching for this humble one."

Lan Zhan did not speak out but the soft tilt of his head and the short lifting of the corners of his lips conveyed all Wei Wuxian needed to understand. He squeezed the pliant hand in his.

He did not want this to end. But by the next day, he would have to return to digging up graves and working on his talismans. He preferred continuing this game. It was understandable, wasn't it? Who would want to spend time with the dead and in the presence of cultivators who belittled him for his cultivation method? Lan Zhan had always been a better choice of company. He hadn't even lectured or insulted him for his unorthodox ways. Also, getting to hold on to him, to tease him without bad repercussions and fear of rejection was a reward all on its own. He couldn't be blamed for wanting to extend the fun.

As the people in the mess hall waned out, curious glances continued to be thrown their way. Endless gossip behind everyone's hands circulated. Now that the lower ranks were told, no doubt by tomorrow the news would have reached everyone and who knew how many more people would fall for it! Heh! Despite not wanting the fun to end, the thought of pranking everyone good also had its merits! Tomorrow at the same time, everyone would be shocked speechless. He was looking forward to it!

True to his expectations, on the next day, the camp was buzzing with the news. He glued himself to Lan Zhan's side but unfortunately the whole day was spent in meetings so other than leaning on the man during the discussions between several sect leaders, he had not gotten to do much. Peacock still got the short end of the stick as he was forced to babysit them during meal times. Wei Wuxian did everything he thought would not bother Lan Zhan to embarrass the Jin sect heir.

Lan Zhan on the other hand was more playful than Wei Wuxian ever gave him credit for. He not only let Wei Wuxian steer him into any place he wanted but he even initiated contact when particularly nasty comments from sect leaders were sent his way.

Their playfulness had reached its peak when during a break, while inside the discussion tent with other leaders. Lan Zhan leaned over to him. Their faces were unusually close but neither

minded it.

"Wei Ying."

"Yes?" he asked, both eyes wide with a poor imitation of coyness.

"You owe me a kiss."

Even Wei Wuxian choked on air at his barefaced delivery. The sect leaders never stood a chance. As the older folk either busied themselves or outright left the tent, Wei Wuxian gathered his wits. He wouldn't be beaten. Not at this. Through his madly beating heart and his face, a picture of crimson sunrise, he played along.

"Oh, because of yesterday's peck?" There was no way Lan Zhan would indulge him so he goaded him on. "Go ahead, clear away my debt."

A gentle golden hooded gaze gauged him. It should not have come as a surprise when long, calloused fingers found purchase over Wei Wuxian's nape and a brief, innocent kiss was placed upon his forehead. It was over before he felt it. Yet, heat assaulted his face which he hid away behind his hands. Lan Zhan gently clasped and caressed them, too.

What even was this man? Where had all the GusuLan timidity and shame gone?

Noontime approached when they had to separate. Wei Wuxian waved goodbye at Lan Zhan with more difficulty than he expected. He found that it was high time to reap the fruits of their labour and start coming clean. Deep inside, he had to admit, he didn't really want to do that. He enjoyed Lan Zhan's closeness and his brave motions defying others just to indulge Wei Wuxian. While his mood soured knowing that this had been simply a game, a treacherous part in him demanded more time together with the man. Though he knew, the longer this kept on going the more Lan Zhan's reputation was going to get tarnished. They had their fun. Now, it was time to clear things up and save Lan Zhan his face.

Yet, it did not go according to plan. When he approached others and revealed that his betrothal had been an elaborate plan, people such as his shidis responded by smirking at him. They said things like, "Ah, nice one, da-shixiong. You almost got us!"

Everyone got it the wrong way around. As in, they thought Wei Wuxian was pranking them by telling them that it was a prank! Somewhere along the two days, the actual prank itself had cemented itself as the truth and now they thought he was joking when he said the betrothal hadn't been real.

He should have seen it coming. It was impossible for people to believe that Lan Zhan would be the instigator of this prank, of any prank!

It all left him speechless. Truly. Jiang Cheng gave even less of a reaction. His response composed of him scolding his head disciple for his scattered mind. His Shijie patted him on the head and told him that it was great that Lan Wangji helped bring out the smile on his face.

"He'll make you so happy, A-Xian. I can see it already! He cares about you and I am so glad that you have found someone who accepts you as yourself and is brave enough to ignore the rules of his sect to protect your love," she said and Wei Wuxian swallowed down a large lump in his throat. The unexpected support and reinforcement from her meant a lot to him and in his chest, he felt the warmth of her words spread out until he was walking on sunshine, guided by an ever-lasting sunrise.

He hadn't known he needed to hear those words. He walked about in a daze for more than a *shi*. Aimless he may have looked but in his mind, he recited Shijie's words and turned them over and over again.

Then, Nie Huaisang laughed out at his reveal before reassuring Wei Wuxian that their gift was half-way done already and that he was excited too. Encouraging compliments spilled from his mouth non-stop. They were accompanied by jabs. Apparently, there were a dozen things to consider for one's wedding and Wei Wuxian was a terrible husband-to-be for not considering them. He had to wonder, how often Nie-xiong daydreamed about other people's weddings.

The night came without any luck. After a few similar but less emotional reactions in which his original prank was ignored, he went to Lan Zhan's tent.

"How is it going on your end?" he asked by the door.

Lan Zhan raised an eyebrow. From behind him rustling of clothes alerted him to the presence of another person in his tent. It was Zewu-jun who smiled at him with an alarmingly fake smile that meant disapproval for attempting to seduce his little brother in the middle of the night. Wei Wuxian would not dare. But he *did* want to talk to his supposed-betrothed.

The thing was, throughout the whole day and the day before, he had felt the kind of happiness he never assumed he would taste again. In the Burial Mounds, his mind had been broken and his body had been tested to its limits. He had starved. He had been beaten and hurt. All that kept him sane was the thoughts of returning to his family and friends. He pulled his battered body by its lapels and shook himself until he walked, until he breathed without spitting out blood and until he learned how to command the resentful energy. When he left the damned place, despair was his sole companion. Thoughts of revenge had carved a place inside his guts. *Kill*, it said. *Destroy*, it screamed. And, he did. When Wen Chao laid dead on the ground, the darkness dissipated slightly. The hot red madness of hate and wrath dulled away. The bright green flames washed the despair away.

In their absence, he felt drained. He was sad. The anger that sustained him had bled out and left a void in his chest that couldn't find the joy it once carried. Right then, he wanted the anger back. He needed that rage to help him put one foot in front of the other and keep going. Had Lan Zhan opposed him while they stood amidst the green flickering flames, he would have roared back. Wickedly, he wanted to argue and fight. The energy in him demanded a target. Lan Zhan would have been the perfect candidate for it. Would he have deserved it? No. But the wild Yin energy swirling in him rarely listened to reason.

Yet, against all his expectations, Lan Zhan hadn't initiated a fight. Instead, he asked if he had been injured. He had asked after Chenqing. Then, he took him to the side and made him

laugh... In a battlefield. Amidst the dozens of dead. Which the more he thought on it, the less sense it made. Lan Zhan, while not being the dullest person he knew (as proven by their latest interactions), was not the sort to joke around in dire situations.

Which lead to the conclusion that... Well, perhaps laughing at his face hadn't been the most elegant nor courteous thing to do. Oh, Gods...

But this was his speculation. The way everyone acted and hearing Lan Zhan's relentless search for him during the time he was missing had revealed so much about the aloof man. Wei Wuxian had been sure, he would be hated by him because of his cultivation. When he didn't, it had been a burden off of his back. The prank had exposed many sentiments from people he had not considered before. Their genuine support left his heart raw. The wrongness that called him a terrible person only magnified with each positive response he received.

Really though, was he the only one who had not considered it from all angles? It was possible. He had been so focused on pranking everyone that he hadn't reflected upon himself or consider what it stood for him and the Second Jade.

Of course, whatever everyone else thought, it didn't matter. Only Lan Zhan's opinion counted as far as Wei Wuxian was concerned. And, that; he didn't really know.

"If it's alright, I wanted to have a chat with Lan Zhan, Xichen-ge."

"My apologies, Wuxian but Wangji and I are in the middle of... something. It'll have to wait until morning."

"Ah, I see. I won't take up more of your time then. Good night." Zewu-jun bid him good night and disappeared into the tent. He turned to Lan Zhan. If he were wrong about this, he would blow a lot of his credibility in the eyes of GusuLan but Wei Wuxian was more of an impulsive person. When tomorrow came and Lan Zhan was indeed joking about everything, Wei Wuxian wanted to have a memento to consolidate his heart. Also, he wanted to be selfish. He wanted to properly feel that kiss on his forehead and appreciate it. Should Lan Zhan not wish to give it, that'll be the end of it. It's not like he would force it out of him.

"A good night kiss?" he asked, pointedly ignoring his quickening pulse.

A pregnant pause had him regret the words. It didn't all end badly. Lan Zhan hesitantly cupped his cheek. Wei Wuxian let him. Another palm settled against his lower back and he slightly tilted his head to see Lan Zhan's expression when he kissed his temple. He had miscalculated. Lan Zhan's lips grazed his cheek and with purposeful slowness that warned Wei Wuxian of what was coming, he leaned towards his lips.

Wei Wuxian's body froze in surprise. Was this truly happening? Lan Zhan paused as well. With a smooth change in direction, his soft lips descended upon the corner of Wei Wuxian's mouth. He lingered until Wei Wuxian's senses flooded back into his soul and remembered that he had asked for a kiss. That he was receiving one.

Lan Zhan's heat disappeared as he stepped back from Wei Wuxian. He barely stomped on the urge to follow the teasing lips and claim a proper, full-on kiss. He missed his mark as

hesitance halted his actions. Lan Zhan caressed his cheek one more time.

"Tomorrow morning."

"Right." Wei Wuxian answered, dazed, "Sweet dreams..."

The winner(s)?

Chapter Summary

It's a confusing day for Wei Wuxian until he enters the tent of GusuLan.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The night was spent sleepless and he tossed and turned until he gave up sleeping altogether. Overthinking the situation did not help. After having breakfast alone in his tent, he found his way back to Lan Zhan's side.

His dear companion was outside GusuLan's main tent reserved for official discussions. His stoic face told nothing but Wei Wuxian saw the slight relaxation of his shoulders upon sensing his approach. Wei Wuxian waved happily. He then greeted the nearby YunmengJiang disciple standing vigil nearby. What was he doing here?

"Wei Ying." His attention snapped back to Lan Zhan.

"So, yesterday, nobody believed me when I tried to explain it."

"Mn."

Well, that was unhelpful. "Same thing with you? I don't get it." He faked thoughtfulness and hummed, "Why won't they trust my word? It's like they are all too eager to see us get married."

"Mn." It sounded a bit forced out.

"Lan Zhan, are you-" *eager to see us get married*, got interrupted by his shidi who had made a habit of screeching at him in the last two days.

"Wei Wuxian! If you can walk and talk, get in here!"

He grimaced but passed through the door after patting Lan Zhan on the shoulder to greet not just Jiang Cheng but his smiling Shijie and an entourage of people who were less smiley. Zewu-jun had his polite smile and he sat across from the YunmengJiang. Next to him, on the seat was the golden-clad LanlingJin; Jin Zixuan who glared at a wall to avoid looking at his Shijie sitting in front of him (good, he did not deserve to be mesmerized by her) and Mianmian who respectfully bowed just to hide a smirk. Nie Huaisang was the only one with a neutral expression. While he was shielded behind his fan and Jiang Cheng's taller form, Wei Wuxian could not tell what he was thinking at all.

As for the rest? Dread filled him. Nervously, he smiled at them all.

Lan Zhan followed him inside as they settled down. Tea was served. Then, the servants left. The air felt a bit stiff. Everyone had their very political and courteous smiles plastered on their faces but no one made the first move to speak up. Obviously, he had to.

"The tea is delicious, Zewu-jun but the atmosphere is making me question if I missed something."

The peacock groaned. Yet, it was his shidi who spoke up. With a roll of his eyes, Jiang Cheng said, "Are you sure you want to accept him as your little brother's spouse, Lan-zongzhu? Once the marriage commences, I won't take refunds."

"Wuxian is a source of joy for Wangji, Jiang-zongzhu. Whether they decide to become part of GusuLan or YunmengJiang, officially, I would be happy to see him by Wangji's side."

That was nice of Zewu-jun to say. But bile rose up in his throat at the sincerity in his tone.

"Can we sort this out quickly and resume our discussions? Not everyone cares about your brothers' love lives." For some reason, Wei Wuxian wanted to punch the peacock. Well, he didn't need a reason to punch the peacock but he would probably get scolded for it if he did it right at that moment.

"Jin-gongzi," Nie Huaisang began, fluttering his eyelashes, "just because you don't understand romance, doesn't mean no one else does! The matters of the heart are delicate. They should be handled gently especially in such unique circumstances."

So, that's what it was about. While he failed to convince any of the people here, Zewu-jun was fully left out of the loop. Lan Zhan must not have mentioned it to his brother yet. Wei Wuxian understood his reasons. Revealing the prank would lead to the end of their little *game* (he disliked his word choice but he dared not label it anything else). Wei Wuxian didn't want to be separa- no, no, no; Wei Wuxian didn't want to stop playing either...

He couldn't think of things like that. Lan Zhan had a reputation to protect. They agreed on two days because the longer it went on, the worse he would be affected by it- not that Lan Zhan said as much in so many words but it was the truth. He chanced a look at his blank face which gave away nothing. Did he want Wei Wuxian to be the one to break the tension and reveal the truth? It was kind of cruel. Though his Shijie's smile grew into a more neutral one and maybe Wei Wuxian was the cruellest one here.

He couldn't let them continue.

"My apologies for the interruption but I- uhm, we weren't serious. It was all a trick!" Seven pairs of eyes, with no evidence of change in their emotions, gazed at him. But he felt their judgment through the silence that followed. "I am sorry?"

His Shijie reached out to him first. "Don't be anxious, A-Xian. If you are worried about having to leave Lotus Pier, we'll arrange something to appease both families. We'll sort everything out for you."

"Shijie, what are you saying? This entire thing is an elaborate prank. It's not... there is no marriage!"

"A-Xian!" She was mad at him. Oh Heavens, he made her mad. "Even a prank should go on for so long. If you keep speaking like this, you'll upset Hanguang-jun."

"I-" He turned to Lan Zhan who sat serenely, sipping his tea. "Lan Zhan, could you please inform everyone that it was all made-up and your idea to begin with!"

Jiang Cheng snorted with a loud, "As if!"

Lan Zhan only replied with, "Mn?" His golden eyes gave the most innocent look Wei Wuxian ever received from the Second Jade. Underneath it, he was sure he saw a look the equivalent of 'Who would believe you?'

A stuttering chuckle escaped his mouth.

"Why are you still playing about?" the peacock asked. Wei Wuxian sent him a glare. "We get it. Really."

"We are here to support you both, Wei-gongzi before moving on to other *subjects*." Even Mianmian was at it! Though the way she looked between his Shijie and the peacock was unnerving.

"It's okay to be nervous, Wei-xiong." Nie Huaisang added. "Getting married is no small task to undertake. I stand by Xichen-ge's statement; you'll make each other very happy."

They were not listening to his words at all. To worsen it, Lan Zhan seemed to be on their side, too.

"Mn."

Mn? Mn, what, Lan Wangji? What was he *mn*ing about? It started as a prank. *His* prank. Why wasn't he disputing it? What? Even after telling it out loud, why did he remain silent?

His Shijie giggled. Jiang Cheng and the peacock averted their eyes and Zewu-jun sipped from his cup with deliberate slowness.

Oh... They were in on it. They already knew and they were making him suffer for it. Payback for his foolishness. He deserved it, though, didn't he?

Yet, it didn't clarify how far back he was supposed to think as a part of *their* prank. He wished, desperately for the tiny kiss, they shared to be real. If it weren't, he was sure to be left heartbroken.

"Lan Zhan, ah, Lan Zhan..." He hid behind his open palms. Shaking his head did not help. "I need everyone to be honest with me because I... I got swept away with my silly stuff and I don't know what's real."

Suddenly, Lan Zhan was sitting right in front of him. His fingers warmed with the simple touch as Lan Zhan dragged them down from his face. He enjoyed the simple touch. Immensely.

"Wei Ying, I wish to court you."

"Oh..." His breath got caught in his throat. His mind blacked out. It hit him heavy as if it were the agitated tail of a measuring snake. Speechless, his mouth hanged open. Lan Zhan's gaze was serious. His low voice sounded like a whisper but lifted the entirety of the weight atop his chest. The tingling sensation in his guts returned gracefully.

Back in Chongyang, in that secluded corner, Lan Zhan had said the exact same thing with the exact same expression. In response, Wei Wuxian had laughed and assumed it to be a joke. Now, the words uttered rang with a different tune in his mind. It was softer, gentler; like a fuzzy blanket laid over his cold torso because of the morning chill. A freshly prepared soup that soothed the aches in his bones.

More importantly, it was real.

While Lan Zhan remained still and his resolve showed no signs of wavering, the strong hold around his hands eased their pressure. Lan Zhan, too, was nervous. Something pulled in his chest at that realization.

"You... You meant it. The first time, too."

"Mn." Lan Zhan reached out to push away a few stray hair strands. His fingertips caressed Wei Wuxian's cheek and neck as they moved back. Their siblings and friends dutifully turned the other way.

"And to be served dog food in broad daylight..." While the peacock's complaint was silenced by Jiang Cheng, Wei Wuxian did not find that cared at all. There was something... someone more important that begged for his attention.

He grappled with Lan Zhan's retreating hand and pulled it towards his chest. "I laughed at your face. I did not take you seriously."

"It was noticed."

"How do you not hate me right now?"

"I could never hate Wei Ying." That was... what was he supposed to do with that?!

He pressed the knuckles of Lan Zhan's hand against his lips, caressing the back of his hand with his own. "I didn't believe you would be interested in me."

"I am." His thick voice was firm. It reassured him.

"For how long?" he asked. Lan Zhan briefly glanced at the other silent occupants in the room and Wei Wuxian knew that it must have been a very long time. He blushed. From head to toe, heat from the embarrassment and the guilt spread across his entire body. "Aiyo, Lan Zhan!"

With a sudden urge to do more, he pushed him away and laid his head on the floor, bowing low. "Forgive this undeserving one, Hanguang-jun. I'm so sorry. I don't even deserve to be in your presence anymore! You should set upon the discipline whip on me. A hundred strikes. No, not even five hundred would be enough!"

Lan Zhan let out a sad whine as he surged forward and lifted him back up, "No strikes. Never."

Wei Wuxian failed to decipher the emotion behind the small sound. "I didn't think. I didn't understand. I hurt you, Lan Zhan."

While the Second Jade shook his head, Jiang Cheng intercepted, "How could you not know, idiot?" He sounded fed-up. "Forget about who said it for now but what part of what he said sounded like a prank? It's Lan Wangji of all people. Why would he joke?"

"Hey, Lan Zhan is a perfect prankster companion. You take that back!"

"A-Xian. A-Cheng." His Shijie's soft warning forced them into silence. He grabbed Lan Zhan's forearms and noticed that his downcast eyes and tightly pressed lips concealed much more uneasiness than he would ever let on. His mind wandered back to the day they spent together; The arm across his waist; The safety and joy he had found in his company; the smallest of kisses they had given to each other unaware of how much they both wanted them. They both had felt at peace and content when they had left for their respective tents.

Even in Chongyang, he had seemed so relieved and hopeful to have found him. And in the days that followed, it had been like being back in the Cloud Recesses. This time, however, instead of standing on opposite sides, it was Wei Wuxian and Lan Wangji against others. Wei Wuxian had enjoyed his company so much that he had forgotten about the terrors that kept him at night. His anger and despair had melted away to excitement and joy. And, it was all thanks to this precious man who loved him with such honesty that no one could deny it even if it went against everything they had assumed about him.

A sense of contentment filled him, now. He pressed the calloused hand against his chest, beneath the two layers of robes, conveying to Lan Zhan how much he, too, cared for him through the rapidly thumping of his heart. Golden eyes flickered to life as hope blossomed in them once more.

Wei Wuxian wished to see it blossom every day.

"Okay," he whispered, "okay, yeah. I wish to court you, too, Lan-er-gege." He repeated it with the confidence that built up with each word. "I won't let you go even if you claim it to be a prank. No way. I won't accept it. You hear me? I like you. I wish to be with you. Wherever and whenever."

"Mn. Not a prank. It was never a prank." The smile he showed almost had him swoon. "I like Wei Ying. I wish to be with Wei Ying. Wherever and whenever."

Wei Wuxian ducked his head down. His poor heart could not take this much bliss.

"Ugh," Jiang Cheng groaned while his Shijie and Mianmian congratulated them. Nie Huaisang relayed his best wishes and Jin Zixuan grumbled something that sounded suspiciously positive.

Zewu-jun exclaimed a boisterous, "Wonderful! Since you two have already delivered the good news to everyone, all that is left is to finalize the wedding details, right, Jiang-zongzhu?"

"I guess..." he grumbled out but somehow it morphed into a somewhat fond expression. "A-Jie, you'll take front on this, yeah?"

"Leave this to me, A-Cheng. Lan-zongzhu and I will ensure everything is sorted out and as for the wedding itself, Nie-gongzi? Do you still wish to help me?"

"Of course! Wei-xiong has a lot to learn about this process too. I'll help on all fronts."

"So, when did Lan Zhan explain it all to you; this morning?" Wei Wuxian was genuinely curious as to when it had all blown over.

"Which part?" Jiang Cheng asked back. "Because I never bought it, to begin with." That didn't sound like the truth at all.

"Neither did I!" Jin Zixuan added. Now, that was definitely a lie. Mianmian raised her eyebrows at him, though as a good disciple, she refrained from opposing her sect heir on such a simple matter.

He only believed Zewu-jun when he claimed the same. "I knew the truth from the start, Wuxian. Wangji could not keep secrets from me and when Jiang-zongzhu came to me with his suspicions as in not believing Wangji would be enamoured by you, I had to explain the situation to him."

"I was really happy for you, A-Xian. I didn't enjoy hearing that you weren't being truthful."

"Jiang-guniang! Ignore his idiocy. Despite being impulsive and bad-mannered, you should not be distressed over such matters. Wei Wuxian did not mean to upset you! Right?" It sounded weird when the peacock defended him even under the guise of a threat but he nodded regardless. He was in no position to argue.

"Yeah. Sorry about that, Shijie..." He meekly responded. His brilliant Shijie of course forgave him and he was grateful for it. Then he smirked, "Lan Zhan, you know you are disqualified, right? I win by default!"

"What does Wei Ying want?" was Lan Zhan's answer. His look carried an intensity and care that could never be faked. He didn't want anything else from this precious man. He already got him.

"I'll gift my reward to you, Lan-er-gege. I won at getting the word around but you beat me fair and square in every other aspect. What do you want for your prize?"

Lan Zhan smiled in return. "No need. I already got Wei Ying." As he snuggled up to Wei Wuxian, a delighted laugh bubbled out of him. Well then, now that they were on the same page, all that was left to do was enjoy all that was to come.

He leaned forward just as Lan Zhan wrapped an arm around his shoulders. Their foreheads touched in a gentle meeting. Unwilling to miss his chance again, Wei Wuxian cupped his dearest Lan Zhan's jaw before pulling it towards him. He met no resistance. Their knees bumped into each other and they rearranged their sitting positions to better embrace. The warm puffs of air grazed Wei Wuxian's cheek. He could do nothing but rub his hand against the chest hidden under many white layers. But really, he would never stop touching Lan Zhan if he could.

"A good morning kiss?" he asked coyly.

A small smile tugged at Lan Zhan's lips. He sensed the vibrating '*Mn*' against his hand. When their lips met in a soft, dry kiss, he felt at peace like his lips were always meant to be upon Wei Wuxian's. There was no nervousness. No worries. Only the excitement and the joy of a loving touch. The tenderness had his pulse fluttering. When Lan Zhan captured his lower lip and nibbled on it, a new world of possibilities had his mind soar with need. And, if he tilted his head and wordlessly asked for a deeper kiss, no one could blame him. He could not wait to kiss Lan Zhan in all the different ways.

His joy was only interrupted by the sound of an annoyed peacock screeching in the distance, "Can I please leave now?"

The war lasted less than a year.

When Lan Wangji confessed to having time travelled, it went about as difficult as it was expected to be. His brother cracked a smile that conveyed a resolute, 'I won't fall for this.' However, with the accuracy of the information he provided, he soon had no doubts lingering in his mind.

The only other person he confessed to other than Xichen was Wei Ying. He had debated with himself whether mentioning a terrible future in which he had died because of so-called-righteous cultivators and had been resurrected to do the bidding of ones veiled behind cracked masks and bloodied fans. In the end, he could never live with himself if he was forced to lie to his Wei Ying. Not so surprisingly, his words were met with a reaction similar to his brothers but it was easier to convince Wei Ying as he spared the botched time travelling array one glance and rapidly set to destroy it. Wangji approved of it. Some knowledge could not be allowed to fall into the wrong hands.

For the same reasons, they had an argument over the Yin Tiger Tally. It had been far more intense than any conflicts that they have had, including Wangji's previous life, and the whole camp noticed it. The tally was yet to be created and he begged Wei Ying to refrain from creating it. His betrothed responded by claiming that he could have full control over it now that they knew about its weak points. They went back and forth on it for days. At least Wangji had convinced him not to do anything until they reached a compromise.

Their arguments came to an end when Lady Jiang sat them down and forced them to talk it out. Alone, they presented their worries and shared their thoughts. When they came close to throwing blows, they stepped outside. They reconvened after resting. It became apparent that Wei Ying would refuse to let the matter rest so Wangji used his own words against him. He had not wanted it. It was difficult too because he had to relay everything from the disgusting plot to frame him for Jin Zixuan's murder and to the death of his Shijie all for a chance at obtaining the power of the tally for themselves. The haunted look Wei Ying had when they parted for the night cause his insides to knot. The next day, Wei Ying was more susceptible to being convinced. Layer by layer, Wangji countered Wei Ying's arguments over why he should craft it. One night, he ran out of arguments. At that time, Wangji offered a compromise that had them relocating the tally in its sword form to Cloud Recesses and keeping it under lock in a cave where no one could reach. It would always be within reach but not utilized unless another Wen Ruohan or Jin Guangyao descended upon them.

Other parts were easier to sort out. Though, Wangji had not expected Wei Ying to just get up and leave once he mentioned the missing golden core. He was gone for days. Almost a week. Wangji worried that he was going to return with the tally but thankfully, he hadn't.

Wei Ying needed some reassurance that he was very much capable of protecting those he loved without a core nor a tally. Wangji did his best to comfort him and convey his honest thoughts on the matter. They did not agree on anything about it. Wangji wasn't worried. Wei Ying knew he was always going to be there for him. He had Wangji's support and together they were stronger than any opposition. Additionally, Wangji had faith that once the DafanWens were on their side and safe, Wen Qing would not deny Wangji the wish to research how to redevelop a golden core in an older person. With their combined resources, and Wei Ying and Wen Qing's geniuses, they would find a way. And if they couldn't find it, they would create it.

Speaking of which, Wangji could hardly wait for the day he met A-Yuan and introduce him to his betrothed.

Mind at ease and heart freed, Wangji felt the burdens atop his shoulders lift one by one. Only after everything he knew was shared and all misunderstandings were cleared that he allowed Wei Ying the closeness they both desired.

"So, Lan-er-gege has one more thing on me. You already slept with my lucky older self and I am yet to receive a single night of passion or a full, unabashed kiss. Right here." He was pouting petulantly while pointing at his lips. That was not entirely true as they had been doing a lot of kissing. Not much else. But certainly lots of kissing.

They had been meeting under the cover of the night, long past Wangji's sleeping time. Discussing matters of the future during the daytime was an open invitation for a disaster that he was unwilling to cause. Even in the last stretches of the war, with victory within their grasp, one could not be too careful. They picked which of their tents they wished to meet randomly. If they camped with a crowded line of YunmengJiang cultivators, Wangji's was deemed more appropriate. As such, tonight they were lounging in his tent.

Wei Ying's lean figure was sprawled on his makeshift bed. The robes over his chest had long since slid free and the peaking skin was drenched in the wine that had spilled down his neck.

The candlelight bathed him in a gentle glow and he looked ethereal with the glistening droplets across his chest and the hooded, captivating gaze.

He belonged there, Wangji thought and drank in the dream-like visage that would soon be his husband. Wei Ying's fingers tapped at his lower lip. It was still wet with the wine he drank and he intentionally smeared the wetness across his chin. There were temptations Wangji would not think twice about abandoning and then there was Wei Ying.

The makeshift bed creaked with his additional weight. Far too small to accommodate them both, Wangji took the initiative to lay over Wei Ying's prone body, their torsos separated by a deep breath's worth of distance. Wangji grasped the offending hand and together with the other one, pinned them atop Wei Ying's head. There was no resistance; Only a short giggle. Their gazes met and he waited for any rejection or hesitance but Wei Ying's scorching need matched Wangji's. It was reflected in their hastened breaths and pulsing blood.

He leaned forward. When their lips touched for the first time that night, he was deliberately slow. A close mouthed kiss. So chaste that it wouldn't even make anyone blush. Except for Wei Ying. Except for Wangji. After all their moments together. His mouth dried at the unguarded expression that welcomed him in. Panting, Wei Ying demanded more. Who was Wangji to deny him?

The second kiss lasted longer. Wangji's tongue teased Wei Ying's lips, urging them to part. He tasted the sweetness of the wine and a faint spiciness as he licked into his mouth. With a tilt of his head, he reached in deeper, angled his kiss to caress the other's tongue the way Wei Ying would love. A moan was shared between them. Wangji swallowed it as their bodies lined up perfectly, feeling each other's quivering and rising desperateness.

One leg was thrown over Wangji's waist. The ankle hooked over and held him locked in place. He responded by grabbing Wei Ying by his hip, spreading his own legs and settling over him more securely. When their groins connected, his betrothed shook with an equal mix of need and embarrassment at how hard he already was. He gave him the time to recollect his thoughts, leaned back only to let him breathe easier. They were in no hurry after all.

Wei Ying licked his lips. The candlelight hid the blush that must have adorned his cheeks. Foreheads pressed against each other, Wangji's world narrowed down to the two of them. Right at this moment. When he was ready, Wangji nosed at his neck. A wet kiss across his pulse had him chuckling. A light bite there had him groaning. Wangji followed the guidance of his need. His lips found the exposed collarbone and latched onto it. The stickiness of the wine carried an aftertaste that wasn't pleasing to his sensitive palate but Wei Ying was pliant in his hands and if his panting was any indication, then he was very much enjoying Wangji's ministrations. When he was sure his betrothed would respond well to it, Wangji lowered his body over his once again. Their grounding hips elicited a cry out of Wei Ying. The warmth of the wanton motion spread from the base of his spine along the length of his entire body. It pooled around his nether regions.

Wangji was ready to move things farther but he remembered that this was one of the many firsts for Wei Ying. Namely an intimate encounter. He wouldn't push it. If Wei Ying chased after him for it, then he would be more than happy to provide. He released his hands. They wound up tight around Wangji's neck and carded through his hair much to his delight.

He whispered his desires. Breath hot against Wei Ying's ear, hips rocking forward against his unconsciously and fingers caressing his clothed thigh, he waited for a reply. It came in the form of a hand sneaking behind his back until his sash was loosened enough to slip a hand down his inner robes, touching his bared skin and leaving a burning trail in its wake. Deft fingers slipped between the tight gap of their stomachs and caressed the toned skin before descending downwards. Wangji jerked in surprise when the said fingers wrapped around his shaft. Wei Ying chuckled smugly and pumped his fist.

Wangji grunted in pleasure. His jaw dropped open before his lips resumed their exploration across the shuddering chest. With each pull and each shift in speed, he faltered. It became increasingly difficult to focus on Wei Ying when he was the one pleasuring Wangji. He rose on his elbows, momentarily dislodging Wei Ying's diligent hold on him. Dark, fully blown out eyes challenged him to take it one more step forward.

So, he did. Wei Ying's dark robes spread out beneath him. His hair became a crown beneath his tilted head. His red inner robes as well as Wangji's were parted apart. As gentle as Wangji allowed himself to be, he caressed and stroked everywhere he could reach. The rapid movement of Wei Ying's chest informed him that he could go farther. At the hem of his trousers, Wangji hovered. Then, the cloth was dragged down enough to restrict Wei Ying's knees. His hold was firm and assured on Wei Ying's shaft. He moved his palm from bottom to top twice before lowering his hips and pressed down. His hand held them both firmly.

Wei Ying surged forward to claim his lips in a bruising kiss. Wangji pushed him back down with his whole weight. He bit into the lower lip presented to him. Wei Ying moaned with a deep, throaty sound and let himself be kissed silly. The precum spilling from them both eased the motion of his hand as he increased his speed and their kisses grew sloppy.

"Lan Zhan, ah, Lan Zhan!" Wei Ying called out as he spilled between them. His whole body went taut, his eyelids dropped close and as he bit into his lip, he rode it to completion. After groaning deeply, he relaxed into the bed. Wangji rutted against his hand to chase the same fever and when Wei Ying's shaky hold joined his, he let himself be pushed over the edge. He collapsed on top of Wei Ying who only tiredly exhaled at the heavy body covering his and smearing their mess across their torso.

Their breaths even out. Wangji felt the coldness seeping into Wei Ying's body and quickly detached himself to clean them both up. Wei Ying pulled his robes closer to his body afterwards. When he made a motion to leave for the night, Wangji, fully knowing the risks and the rules, asked him to stay. It would be a tight fit but they had seen that there were ways of squeezing into any bed.

"You are too much for my heart, Lan Zhan." Wei Ying whispered once they were tucked in. His head laid over Wangji's chest and he fiddled with the sleeves of Wangji's robes. "I'm happy that you never gave up on me. Even going as far as travelling back in time. How did I ever make you fall for me?"

"Just by being Wei Ying. I never stood a chance against you."

Wei Ying chuckled and Wangji felt the vibrations across his chest. He ran his fingers through the wild hair. Listening to Wei Ying's soft breathing until they even out lulled him to a

comfortable sleep with his beloved in his arms and a hopeful future on the horizon.

Chapter End Notes

Side note: I have alternating POV with LWJ and WWX because during the majority of the story LWJ would be just screaming internally.

This had been fun to write. While it was not originally a stand alone, I think it worked out well at the end. Thank you all for reading, your kudos and comments! ✨😊❤️

There are like lots of bits that are not mentioned about the time travelling aspect either. I haven't touched upon Jin Guangyao's fate for one, so go wild and imagine it going any way you like. Maybe LWJ is merciful and gives him a chance; JGY lives under the guidance of LXC. Maybe NHS and NMJ are let in on the secret and one of them goes apeshit on him. Or maybe with WWX they find a way to subdue the entire LanlingJin Sect. Who knows?! (I personally wish for JZX (aka Peacock) to take over his father's place after JGS suffers some unfortunate accident during a very compromising thing he was doing or something) . Maybe JGS dies, like in a few months. LWJ suspects JGY but it's actually one of the many women he ignored (aided by NHS). =))
(oh and by the way the annoying cousin JZX and Su She are forever punished with guard duty under the worst weather possible forever)

JC learns to live with the lovely dovely couple when they spend half a year in Lotus Pier during winter-spring seasons (most often) but its made easier with Wen Qing and some other DafanWens living in LP and clearing up the messes left behind by the cultivation world. WWX attends the wedding of JYL and the month-celebration of JL, etc. and the story keeps going. I also would like to think they manage to revolutionize the way golden core-growth works and find a way to sort all that out! LWJ is content and happy to have prioritize his love for WWX and is forever happy. Or something 😊❤️❤️❤️
(oh, and I want WWX/JC/JYL to punch a Jin; doesn't matter which)
[I just finished writing a LWJ POV as well! Thanks for your patience!]

Extra 1/3 - The Attempt

Chapter Summary

Their journey from Chongyang to the main camp is peaceful. Though the next few days would be anything but peaceful.

Chapter Notes

So, I finally got around to writing the LWJ POV. Took me a while but it is mostly done. It needs more editing but I'll update the rest soon.

It's a three part LWJ POV as the events occur starting with LWJ, WWX and JC leaving Chongyang. All of poor LWJ's inner screams are thus revealed ;D

There was a heavy odour of death accompanying them out of Chongyang. Alongside it was the burnt wood and flesh. Yet, all Wangji could smell all the way back to the main camp was the intoxicating scent of Wei Ying, huddled close to his back.

The ghost of a kiss they hadn't shared pretty much carried Wangji through the night. He had wanted to close that abyss like the distance between them. He had needed to feel those red lips and taste their sweetness. He had an urge that kept on growing and Wangji's heart soared with each touch he and Wei Ying shared as they made their way back on horseback. He didn't even think about the comical let down of a response he had just received. He didn't even pretend to be hesitant when he hoisted Wei Ying on his horse and let him half sleep half mumble nonsense while leaning on Wangji's back, fingers loosely clinging to his robes and completely ignoring his annoying brother's glaring. He had Wei Ying by his side. He was content with it. For the time being.

However, Jiang Wanyin could not complain. The arrangement was a must. He had two of their younger cultivators with him and behind them, both the survivors were huddled either on whichever cart they could salvage or any horse they could save which weren't much. As such Wangji had claimed Wei Ying to ride with him.

It was a slow march. For the better half of the day, they travelled non-stop and only late into the night they reached the main forces of the Sunshot campaign. After that, it went faster and they managed to reach their tents soon after. Wei Ying refused to part with Wangji when Jiang Wanyin turned towards the YunmengJiang Sect area much to Wangji's delight and the sect leader's dismay. He didn't even give a reason for it; Just followed Wangji to the GusuLan tent like a duckling trailing after its mother. He wobbled similarly too. Despite trying to hide

it, Wangji could tell how tired he was. After all, the amount of energy he used was tremendous and him still standing, pretending to be fine, was a testament to his willpower.

Lan Xichen welcomed them in his tent. Wangji drunk in the unburdened, except with the weight of war, a light-hearted visage of his brother. How sad was it that Xichen would wither long after the war at a time when peace should have ruled? At least now Wangji had a chance to protect his brother, too.

Lan Xichen was delighted to see the safe return of Wei Ying. He was also very confused upon hearing of their new arrangement.

"I am sorry, what do you mean?" his brother repeated a second time. In utter disbelief.

"Xiongzhong, I would like to court Wei Ying."

From next to him, His beloved also fell to a low bow. "I- I, too wish to court Lan Zhan, Zewu-jun." It was a wonder to note the reddening cheeks of Wei Ying's and the slight stutter in his speech.

"I... Right now?" They nodded. It was rare to witness his brother be at a loss for words. "Ah, I think this is wonderful but you have been apart for a long while and underwent extreme duress. Why don't you sleep on it?"

"We are certain, xiongzhong. While it would be wise to not rush any of the proceedings, we would like you to be informed."

"I see." His brother replied though his face was less certain than his voice.

Wangji saw Wei Ying out. Then he decided to walk him towards YunmengJiang area just in case, he fell asleep on his feet. At least that's what he said when he followed him all the way to his tent before bidding him goodnight. Back in GusuLan's main tent, his brother raised an elegant eyebrow at him.

"What is happening, Wangji?" Of course, his brother realized that something was off with them. While Wangji was no longer the young man his brother assumed him to be, he was still not the type of person to rush his decisions nor play along with others, even with Wei Ying.

Do not lie, was a doctrine integrated into his very being. His brother was his rock. Even when their relationship had suffered from arguments and he had felt betrayed by him for everything that was allowed to happen to Wei Ying and the innocents of the war, at this point in time, this brother of his carried no guilt and no blame for what his future might do. He also desperately needed him on his side. Just like when they had been boys. So, he came clean about the prank. Then, he confessed to his deep love. By the end of their talk, Wangji was left winded, wondering how he was yet to break at the misunderstanding that equal parts annoyed and surprised him.

"I do not pretend to understand your reasoning for doing this, didi. Being honest would surely be more profitable for you both in the long run."

How was Wangji supposed to explain that unless Wei Ying put the dots together and reach a conclusion, he was not in a mindset to believe a single word of Wangji's? That it was how his beloved's mind worked... That it was how he had to solve the puzzle that was his wild and untamed emotions, to build up to the greater scenery that was what laid his heart. Wei Ying did not consider a feeling as a straightforward emotion but as a collection of all the possibilities that could mound up to any form or shape. Love wasn't just *love*. Love was a culmination of the small things that others did for him and everything he did for them. Even though he could never recall a favour he did for others, he held onto the goodness shown to him with a scorched heart until it burned through his chest and he had nothing left to give. And the two of them, who had no interaction for months, was not a priority in the face of his wrath against the QishanWens. Add to that the turmoil and sadness that clouded his positive emotions, and Wangji wasn't surprised that his request for courtship had not been perceived as love.

This was his understanding. At least what he managed to rationalize after observing Wei Ying for two lifetimes. The alternative was... well, it was nothing he wanted to admit to himself or he would start digging his own grave out of shame and wait for Wei Ying to dug him back up.

"Wangji? Are you alright?"

"Yes. Xiongzhang, we should inform Shufu as well."

"We should certainly not."

"Mn?" Wei Ying might not take this seriously but surely his brother did.

"Didi... The war is stressful enough." He said and Wangji tilted his head. He was aware of that. As was everyone. "Shufu should not be involved until Wei-gongzi recognises your feelings for what they are. This is for your good as well."

"I know Wei Ying's heart."

"I am certain you do. However, let us keep this *prank* within the confines of the main camp." That meant he could not inform many of the sect leaders as well as high ranking cultivators. The number of targets would be greatly reduced. Still, he could work with this.

Wangji thickened his face. He was ready to face everyone and declare his betrothal but Nie-zongzhu was outside the camp as were many of the sect leaders. This severely limited the number of people he could reach out to. So, he turned towards LanlingJin tents. To say that everyone was surprised was an underestimation and when he asked to see Luo Qingyang, all of the eyes nearby turned to him. Wide and inquisitive, they tracked him across the tent, no doubt aiming to collect as much gossip as they can. It made his skin crawl. Judgment may not be what's on their minds but it was not only nice thoughts that showed on their faces.

How did Wei Ying do this? To walk through rows of cultivators who were displeased with his presence and to hold his head up. Wangji was not unfamiliar with being disliked, especially

after the whole nightmare that was brought upon by Jin Guangyao, yet, the eyes on his back made him uncomfortable.

Predictably, Luo Qingyang welcomed him with much astonishment. He recalled that she would not have stood against her sect yet so they had not formed a bond of camaraderie. Yet.

"Hanguang-jun, how may this humble one assist you?"

Wangji thought of an appropriate way to inform her of his intended courtship. No matter the phrasing, it was bound to come out as awkward as he imagined it would be. Not to mention inappropriate. He had grown and matured in the decades he had lived but this was simply embarrassing. There was no possibility for him to voice this prank.

"Hanguang-jun?" Right. She was waiting for him. Focus. Wei Ying, the one from his once future-past, always said to ask his question hidden within others if he felt uncomfortable voicing them. The same could be applied to this statement, no?

"I wish to ask for your opinion, Luo-guniang," he decided on saying. He directed her towards the back of the tents where they were still visible to those with hawk-like gazes but far away enough to have fewer people wandering around. Start simple. With a question you knew they knew the answer to. "Do you recall Wei Wuxian?"

"Wei-gongzi? Yes, of course, Hanguang-jun. I remember him from the Wen indoctrination camp in which he was a bit um... over-friendly, let's say. But, in the end, he saved me from that awful mistress. I'm grateful for his intervention. I believe he is a good person despite his childishness. It was a shame to hear he went missing after the attack on Lotus Pier. I do wish that he is alright." She remembered to take precisely one breath as she went on. "Jiang-zongzhu was searching for him as were you if rumours are to be believed. I'd be happy to help in this regard!"

Finally, she settled. Wangji relaxed his stance. This was already going better than he hoped. Perhaps, he wasn't so bad at conversing with others and Wei Ying had always praised him for it after all.

"Wei Ying was found yesterday."

"Is that so? I'm so glad."

"Wen Chao and his mistress have also been dealt with."

"Good. They had it coming for a long time. Wait... was it Wei-gongzi?"

"Mn."

"Good for him. He had to repay that woman back for the wound she left on his chest!"

Indeed, Wei Ying had and made her pay it ten-fold. Wangji did not provide her with gruesome details. The fewer people feared Wei Ying, the better he would be off later on.

"Hanguang-jun, I appreciate knowing that he is well and I don't wish to sound ungrateful but why have you personally come to tell me this?"

This was the crucial point. He had to get it right. "I recalled... your *attention* on... *each other*." Saying that hurt. As far as lies go, this one cut deep and he would punish himself later on for it.

"Attention?" Luo Qingyang tilted her head. She looked as confused as he felt. The deception was not his forte and he should have known better. A half-truth would have to do.

"Luo-guniang, I wish to court Wei Ying and ascertain that there was no-" How best to put it?

She finished his sentence for him, a widening smile on her face, "-no feelings between us? Do not worry, Hanguang-jun. I view Wei-gongzi as a friend whom I can look after. If you are interested in him, I would not be an obstacle! None at all!"

At least she had gotten what he felt. Now, if only Wei Ying did the same.

He found that disclosing such personal things was extremely unpleasant. While Lan Xichen agreed to help, Wangji did not expect it to be the way he did. His brother simply mentioned Wangji's intentions of being betrothed to Wei Ying right after revealing that the young man had been found with ease and confidence, in the middle of a battlefield discussion with Sect Leader Yao and the head disciple of the BalingOuyang Sect. It led to a silence so profound that even the usually callous sect leader Yao could not fill it.

After that awkwardness, by noon Wangji had assumed (or rather hoped) that Wei Ying would have already come to realize certain things. However, when they met by chance, the answer was clear to him. He had not. A small part of Wangji's mind, deep down, at the farthest corner laughed at his misery, already at ease with the knowledge that Wei Ying would reciprocate. Yet, a bigger part of him demanded him to pull Wei Ying in an embrace and never let go. He wanted to steal him away. Kiss him silly. Make him realize the depth of his love. Remind him that he was cared for and that Wangji would always be there to catch him should he fall. For the time being, however, he settled for teasing.

Wei Ying had the loveliest shades of crimson colouring his cheeks as Wangji responded to his playfulness with practised ease. Though his mind blanked out when his brother had Wei Ying call him 'Xichen-ge.' Wangji barely registered that his dearest mentioned that he had informed most of the people he said he would about their *arrangement*.

Wei Ying was a smart, innovative man. When faced with a problem, he was quick to offer solutions. When complicated issues others had not even seen arose, he was able to tear it apart. Examine and study it all until everything made sense. Then, explain everything to everyone from juniors to elders. Yet, even after witnessing the reactions of Jiang Wanyin, Jiang Yanli and Nie Huaisang, then finally Jin Zuxian, he had remained oblivious. Was it just a façade? Did Wei Ying simply play around trying to trip Wangji up? Get him to confess to the truth of the *prank*? Had Wangji miscalculated something? It wasn't malicious. It wasn't ill-intended. That was not Wei Ying's way. So why?

Did Wei Ying intend to reverse the prank and hint at Wangji in the same way he was trying to be heard by Wei Ying? Was he going to be out-pranked?

Somehow, the answer seemed to be 'no.' Curiously, Wangji was unsure.

Extra 2/3 - The Realization

Chapter Summary

In the mess hall, Lan Wangji feels his hope grow. In the aftermath, not so much.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Walking towards the mess hall, Wei Ying by his side, he tried his hardest to not get swept away in his head. Whatever he was planning, he was clearly very excited and Wangji did not want to miss a second of this.

Wei Ying did not disappoint. The moment they went inside the hall, he dashed forward and jumped on the table. One of his juniors shrieked while others began looking around wildly, trying very hard not to break the rule of silence during meals. He commended them for it. Though he refused to accept any blame for the need for it to begin with.

"I'm going to marry Lan Zhan!" Wei Ying yelled. Talking about it was one thing but hearing it from him, radiating so much happiness, filled Wangji's heart with joy. A burst of light engulfed him. And, the serenity that would only come to him after hours of meditation found him, lingering as an afterwards of a day spent under the spring sun. He could not even care about his bewildered disciples. He nodded at them to confirm the wild notion and headed to help his beloved down from the table. Wei Ying had to be engulfed in his arms. In that instance, nothing else was as important as having him in his embrace. To feel Wei Ying nuzzling closer and leaning his head on his shoulder; was a sweet addition that had him melt against the other man. He was in pure bliss.

Of course, someone had to break up their precious moment; Jiang Wanyin raged on and on. Not that Wangji cared. Wei Ying's chest was under his fingertips, smoothness of the fine material the only thing between him and his bare skin. And there was no force that could make Wangji let go of him.

When Jiang Wanyin made another uncouth comment about separating them, he glared at him. He had no right to forbid Wei Ying. Of anything. However, there was no need to voice his rejection at first as both Wangji and Wei Ying stood tall and imposing before the rapidly reddening sect leader. Perhaps Wangji was seeing Sandu Shengshou and not this younger version in front of him and his negative feelings were running rampant. Yet, he cared not when the young sect leader opened his mouth and Wangji swept his opinion aside.

Then, suddenly a softness brushed against his cheek. It was so gentle and so fleeting that he almost missed it yet the leftover warmth of soft lips undeniably belonged to one person. His world shifted. Maybe it was the frustrating noises around him or maybe it was the charged air

that affected his mind. Amidst the chaos that erupted with one innocent kiss on his cheek, Wei Ying's laughter was unmistakable while his broad chest pressed against Wangji's back, his hot breath grazing red ears and his hand clasping at the white robes were mind-numbingly addictive.

Don't blackout, he whispered to himself, *Don't blackout and miss this precious moment*.

The thunderous need to turn around and engulf the playful man in his strongest embrace, to devour his lips amidst a crowd, to shove away any and all misconceptions and stake his claim burned inside him. The buzzing from yesterday returned. It aimed to push him back on the disciplined path and ignore his needs involving the man plastered at his back; the one whose rapidly beating heart matched his own as his warmth cloaked Wangji from uncertainty's coldness.

Somehow, he gathered his thoughts long enough to begin thinking. He decided that this was not an in the heat of the moment act. This was Wei Ying playing around and showing his affections. Peppering Wangji with his love. Intentionally (or unknowingly?) may be instinctively claiming him as Wei Ying's. Wangji was all for it. He was ready for the taking and giving.

The hand began to retreat from his chest. Oh, no. He was not allowed to let go that easily. If Wei Ying wanted to prove the cultivation world they were to be as one, Wangji was not going to let him off the hook that easy. He held on to his thin wrist. Sect Leader Jiang roared. It was his brother who settled down everyone and whisked the other sect leader away. Probably for the best lest Jiang Wanyin lit the whole tent on fire with his lightning.

Had Wangji been allowed to take Wei Ying back to his quarters, he would have been happier but as things were, they were seated between the GusuLan and LanlingJin Sects. His desolate week was slowly turning into a most pleasant one even though he had to suffer the gossip and the unruly complaints about his love confession. It's not like Jin Zixuan had any right to question his choice of location or words when confessing to his love. Considering that back on the Phoenix Mountain (in that first lifetime), the Jin sect heir had bolted the moment he made a vague reference in liking Jiang Yanli like some nine-year-old embarrassing themselves in front of their teacher. Compared to him, Wangji's romantic side and subsequent interactions with his beloved had been soaring. That was obvious from Wei Ying's softened gaze and loving (albeit playful) gestures throughout all day. Yes, Wangji was truly a romantic. Jin Zixuan could learn to cherish his future-wife by taking their example.

A small smile stretched his lips. It was instantly caught by Wei Ying who poked at his cheek and grinned with all his teeth showing. He wanted to kiss the offending fingertip but refrained from overdoing it with their display. GusuLan juniors were already, shamefully, wrecked. He couldn't upset them further. Not in good conscience.

Yet, it was an undeniable fact that the ever-growing heat in his belly kept growing with each touch he shared with his beloved. He mostly ignored the rest of the topic of his confession and the jabs sent his way. Thankfully, he had one ally on his side. As Luo Qingyang backed his decisions up and Wei Ying came to realize the pain of the three months Wangji spent searching for him, he felt both guilty, for making him worried and happy to see the gentleness in his beautiful silver eyes.

A voice in his head told him not to do it. They were amidst the elderly and the leaders of sects, devising plans and navigating the battlefield. Yet, Wei Ying sat *innocently* by his side; Even after he had traced his hand down Wangji's back as they walked, squeezed his thigh while seated and caressed the loose strands of hair during the meeting (out of boredom most likely). Wangji had been reciting his sect's doctrines since the dawn. Calming himself and his twitching fingers down was not easy when his beloved was too preoccupied with annoying other cultivators all the while thoughts of seizing his wrists, binding them with his ribbon and biting into the soft skin of his lips were swirling around Wangji's mind.

He slipped a few times. Out of habit, he reached out for his beloved when unsavoury words and glances were sent his way. Wei Ying only ever softened his gaze whenever that happened. It was clear that this was only a matter of time before one of them cracked and gave the game away. Then, their feelings would pour out naturally and they would forever remain side-by-side.

An idea, one that would no doubt make Wei Ying proud, came to his mind. Reaching forward, he asked for a kiss. He had no need to turn around to see the new wave of spluttering in the room. Also, he had better things to look at like Wei Ying's heated cheeks and his hooded gaze. Wei Ying did not rise to the bait. Instead, he goaded him on and Wangji, having learned that the only way to beat his dearest was by acting more shameless than he, caressed the back of Wei Ying's neck. Foregoing the common sense and ignoring the sensibilities of their world, he succumbed to his need to prove to Wei Ying and the world that his love was boundless. Into that one small kiss on his forehead, he poured his affection.

A number of cultivators berated them and one of them went as far as demanding they got kicked out of the meeting. Wangji sent him his iciest glare. Coupled with Jin Zixuan cutting the cultivator short to divert the attention back to the matters at hand, they moved on rapidly.

They held back their affections after that. At noon, Wei Ying announced that he would take his leave.

"Where to?" Wangji asked; completely cluelessly.

"Hm? Well, we have to reveal to them know it was all a prank, right? Or have you forgotten, Lan Zhan?" A hearty, albeit stuttering, laughter followed his words but Lan Wangji was not hearing it.

To reveal... Wei Ying said, *that it's all a prank...* Oh... Oh, no... The revelation hit him heavy in the guts. His world spun. Wei Ying had not gotten it. Not at all. Wangji had assumed wrong that they have been on the same page because Wei Ying wasn't even looking at the same book as he was! All morning he had thought they've been playing off of each other while his dearest was actually, literally playing. This would have been a good time to pass out. If he could. Perhaps he would. After some alcohol. Or some rigorous exercise?

He blinked. Face imitating stone, he could only watch as Wei Ying gently elbowed him, "Well, I'll see you later, Lan Zhan!" Then he was gone. Hips swaying, Chenqing twirling between deft fingers, Wei Ying just walked away.

Maybe he should just scream himself to unconsciousness. Yes, that sounded doable.

Lan Xichen found him searching through the rations behind the mess hall. It was not his greatest moment, granted, but he did not care. He needed to stop his mind from spiralling out of control.

"Didi, you are worrying me. Why don't you tell me what you need and I'll look around for it?"

"Wine," Wangji replied and his brother froze.

"For Wei-gongzi?"

An empty pot crashed against the ground. It had slipped through his fingers which was something that did not happen. At any given time. He shook his head before leaning over to collect the broken pieces. Lan Xichen was by his side immediately. He took his forearm and directed him away from the broken pieces before leaning in to collect them. He shook his stupor off and helped him.

His brother pleaded once they had cleaned it up. "Wangji. Please, sit with me. Tell me what's wrong."

So, he explained. He talked about how Wei Ying was still oblivious to his feelings and how this whole prank was to him exactly just that; a prank. It felt like the prank was on Wangji more so than anyone else.

"No, didi. Wei-gongzi cares about you. I have seen it these past two days as did everyone else. His actions are brisk. To some, it seems like he doesn't mean his words but he is not dishonest with his love. Unaware as he may be of his own feelings, you recognise them. His feelings are there waiting to be resurfaced. Weren't you sure of this, too?"

"Of that, I have no doubt, xiongzhang. But the timing may be wrong for him..."

"It is the middle of a war. And it is all so sudden." Xichen agreed much to his dismay.

"Happy news indeed improves morale but your rush into a relationship than to marriage is unlike anything we ever do, Wangji. Is it a wonder that Wei-gongzi might suspect it's unlike you? Even I was unsure of your actions. How could he accept your version of the truth when you have given him two contradictory ones?"

He remained silent as they walked back to his tent. Only once inside, he allowed himself to respond.

"I was clear. The first time around." They had been in a post-battle field. And, he hated to admit it but Jin Zixuan might have been a little right; perhaps he should have waited to confess until they were both wearing clean clothes and away from dead bodies... But then he would not have seen the relaxed posture or heard the night-piercing laughter. He would not have gotten to create new, precious memories with his Wei Ying nor spent so much time

together. It would have killed him. No, Jin Zixuan was not right. Wei Ying needed to know of his love. His desire had to be expressed! And, he knew of Wei Ying's heart; he had no regrets.

"I should have kissed him, too." It would do wonders to convince everyone as well. "Maybe do even more."

"No!" His brother smoothed out the anxiousness from his face. Wangji had missed seeing this gentle, young and still hopeful face of his brother.

In his mind, Wangji clarified that as "Not yet."

A visitor came to their tent and interrupted them.

"How is it going on your end?" was the last thing he wanted to hear from Wei Ying. His brother saw this as clear as a day. Then, when Wei Ying, with somewhat an abashed face, requested to speak with him, his traitorous brother turned him down. Understandable seeing how Wangji was at an emotionally low point and struggling because of Wei Ying. Yet, Wangji would always want to see him. Still, Lan Xichen allowed them a moment outside the tent. It was more than he had hoped for.

Even Wangji did not expect the good night kiss Wei Ying so heartfully requested. For all the discipline he had, he almost lost himself in his wide silver eyes. He went as far as leaning forward, teasing him the same way he used to do in his future-past. Willing to cut this game short, he was about to close the distance between their expecting lips. But he saw the hesitancy. The uncertain frowning of Wei Ying's brows. The nervousness that had him freeze and remain confused.

Not yet, he reminded himself. It wasn't the right time. His kiss landed beside the soft lips, saddened to have missed their mark.

He did not see Wei Ying leave because he disappeared into the tent the moment, they bid their goodnights. His heart was fluttering madly. Like a wild sparrow stuck in a crowded house, it went wild with each breath he took and cost him his direction as he stumbled into the room. Lan Xichen grabbed his elbow at once. Though concerned, he was quick to settle him down with a warm tea between his palms.

Wangji allowed his eyes to shut close. The tenseness in his shoulders melted away and he was left to float about in a forest, free of burdens and limitations, all the way towards the sun.

"Didi?"

"Mn."

He asked for a kiss, he wanted to say but even without using his words, his brother let out an amused huff possibly having already heard Wei Ying's question. They weren't exactly out of his earshot.

"I'm happy for you, Wangji."

"Mn." And happy he was. They had been right after all. His love was reciprocated. His love was appreciated. His love was waiting for him to welcoming him.

"However," his brother carried a mischievous smirk, "while this may be unbecoming of me as a sect leader, I firmly believe that as your older brother, we should up our game and prove to young Wuxian that emotions are not to be taken lightly."

"Xiongzhong?"

"Are you not going to reprimand me saying, do not engage in frivolous activities, didi?"

The young Wangji would have. Yet, the older Wangji saw the opportunity as it was and shook his head. "What do you have in mind, xiongzhong?"

Chapter End Notes

For those who assumed WWX was being subtle with his wording when he announced his engagement... he was not.

Extra 3/3 – The Endgame

Chapter Summary

It's high time to come clean.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The morning came quicker than ever before. After Wei Ying's surprise visit which almost had Wangji let his desire get the better of him, his brother had taken control. His arrangement, Wangji had not seen until the morning right before the breakfast and after a number of guests came to meet them in the main tent.

It was not an unusual ensemble of people and it gave Wangji the distinct feeling of being back in the Cloud Recesses during their study years. As Lan Xichen explained the details of his and Wei Ying's predicament, or rather game, various expressions crossed their guests' faces.

Jiang Wanyin, it turned out, already knew of the said prank as explained to him by his brother yesterday after that mess hall incident. Hence, he was the one with the least amount of annoyance dripping out of him. As opposed to that, Jin Zixuan gave a loud, undignified exclamation while pointing accusingly at Wangji. He would be lying if he claimed not to have enjoyed several improper emotions crossing his face, a clear sign that meant Wei Ying had convinced him rather successfully.

"That... that jerk!" the Jin Sect heir yelled, unable to complete one full sentence. "He said- all this time! The shamelessness! I had to endure all your- Ah!"

"Shut up already." Jiang Wanyin was exasperated beyond measure.

Honestly, neither of the men was his concern because it was the ladies that were less than pleased. Lady Jiang hid her apparent disappointment behind a sigh, almost as if fearing just what she had been told. Luo Qingyang was cleared with her discontent as she sent an icy glare at Wangji.

"Did you not mean what you said, Hanguang-jun?" Even if she sounded accusing, Wangji was in no position to reprimand her for it.

"I meant it."

Luo Qingyang held her gaze for another moment, searching and judging. She eventually found him to be honest and worthy of his word. Perhaps his virtues were not the things she questioned but rather his feelings for Wei Ying. Either way, he would not come up short.

"Hanguang-jun," Lady Jiang began, "your feelings, is A-Xian not aware of them?"

That was the trickiest question to answer. Had Wangji clearly confessed his feelings? No. They were implied when he requested to court him. Yet, it was possibly not enough for Wei Ying to believe him.

"Wangji assumed Wuxian would come to realize both their feelings, Jiang-guniang." His brother tried to explain the mess of thoughts in Wangji's mind. "After observing them, as did I."

"He looked so happy about it. I can't believe he did not mean it."

"That's because he is an idiot," Jiang Wanyin added in. Wangji huffed at him.

There was another person in the room who did not comment on their explanation. Nie Huaisang was silent. Fan stretched open before him. Eyes darting between the opposing sides. One would assume he was scared of the loudness around him, tense and willing to join in on the fight in fear of getting scolded. One would be wrong. Wangji knew the hidden depths of the future-sect leader (something Wangji would do everything to stop from becoming a reality in the way of keeping his older brother alive and in charge). He stared at Nie Huaisang's ever so slight smirk. Not malicious but amused at the turn of events. He must have figured Wei Ying's intentions from the moment they spoke and went along with it just for the sake of doing it.

"Ji-xiong?" Nie Huaisang raised both his eyebrows innocently as he called him.

"You figured it out." Wangji was sure of it.

Nie Huaisang's eyes widened. Wangji had been right after all. "Yes, Ji-xiong but Wei-xiong was a bit out of his depth with this prank. It was far too obvious! I only ever tried to guide him in the right direction. My apologies!"

"No need."

"What do you mean guide him in the right direction?" Jiang Wanyin asked. Wangji wished he hadn't.

"Oh, well." Nie Huaisang fidgeted. "I provided some texts to help awaken his feelings?"

"Huh? What kind of-" A moment later Jiang Wanyin was jumping to his feet, screaming at the quivering man. "Nie Huaisang! Did you give my brother porn?! In the middle of a battlefield?!"

"A-Cheng!"

"Jiang-zongzhu!"

Wangji left the tent. This was too much excitement for one morning and their main guest hadn't even arrived yet. His brother could sort out the rest of the discussion by himself. Wangji had faith.

Lan Xichen would explain and detail that they were not to give the prank away until Wei Ying realized it by himself. With all of them gathered, it wouldn't take much for him. Hopefully. Jiang Wanyin and Jin Zixuan were more than onboard with getting a bit of innocent payback. Others too did not oppose the idea. Everyone inside had already agreed that their feelings were mutual. They also had agreed that Wei Ying needed to be beaten at his own game.

He didn't have to wait long before Wei Ying turned around the corner of a tent with his wild hair, barely combed and swaying gently with the morning breeze. His walk was lazy. Clearly, he was nowhere near awake yet. Rubbing one eye with the back of his hand and after yawning ever so adorably, he smiled as he approached the tent. With him, Wei Ying brought about calmness to Wangji.

He didn't want to give the end game away so despite wanting to answer all of Wei Ying's questions, he cut himself short. Thankfully, Jiang Wanyin called them inside.

Inside the tent, everyone looked as tense as Wangji felt. While this was meant to be them teaching Wei Ying how to be more open and honest about his feelings and actions (at least that was the reason for Wangji but he was sure some others, namely Jin Zixuan was only here to get some revenge for falling into his prank), they were neither coordinated with each other nor able to hide their intentions. Even as he sipped his tea, an awkward silence settled around the mismatched group. No wonder Wei Ying caught on quickly.

"The tea is delicious, Zewu-jun but the atmosphere is making me question if I missed something."

Jiang Cheng was the first to respond, "Are you sure you want to accept him as your little brother's spouse, Lan-zongzhu? Once the marriage commences, I won't take refunds."

Inwardly Wangji scoffed. There was no way he would give up Wei Ying ever again. Or hand him over to anyone. Never. No chance. Especially not to Sandu Shengshou.

"Wuxian is a source of joy for Wangji, Jiang-zongzhu. Whether they decide to become part of GusuLan or YunmengJiang, officially, I would be happy to see him by Wangji's side." His brother had given a good reply to Jiang Wanyin's unnecessary comment. Though Wei Ying seemed to pale at his kind words. Wangji had a guess that he was feeling steadily guiltier as they talked more about his prank as if it were real. And it was, as Wei Ying would realize soon.

When his confession of the truth came out, Wei Ying was teased further yet Wangji believed lady Jing had every right to push him more. "A-Xian! Even a prank should go on for so long. If you keep speaking like this, you'll upset Hanguang-jun."

Then, Wei Ying turned to Wangji with the doe eyed look that had his legs quiver. He stubbornly clung to his tea and forced himself to meet his silver gaze evenly. "Lan Zhan, could you please inform everyone that it was all made-up and your idea to begin with!"

He heard someone yell, "As if!"

It was not the truth but over the years Wangji had learned to accept his reputation and utilize it to his advantage. If they saw him as incapable of being playful then... that was on them. The future-past Wei Ying would have had a couple of responses to that too mainly since he learned how to tease Wei Ying back. Not only playful but he was even called merciless because of it; not that there would be any heat behind Wei Ying's words. Especially when he was flat on his back with Wangji above and inside him. Hands tied to the bed. Vision taken away by a simple cloth. And, that beautiful mouth parted open with their relentless nightly activities, gasping and crying, breath hitching and begging for Wangji to stop teasing...

There was no doubt; he knew how to tease his future husband.

So, he raised his tea up and send Wei Ying an inconspicuous look. "Mn?" It was always a pleasure to see the rising redness on that smooth neck and leave Wei Ying speechless with his blatant shamelessness. A most precious sight.

He ignored the several comments thrown around in favour of observing the confusion, masked under desperation, of his beloved's face. He only caught up with Nie Huaisang's words, "It's okay to be nervous, Wei-xiong. Getting married is no small task to undertake. I stand by Xichen-ge's statement; you'll make each other very happy."

"Mn." So very true. The head-shaker was right on point with his observations as was his brother.

Something in Wei Ying shifted then. He shed that confused little bunny aura. His sharp perception caught on the giggles and the side glances. The deliberateness of their acting was far too transparent to him. It was a wonder it lasted as long as it did (then again, he was the sort of man who assumed *Wangji* was pranking him amidst a field of carnage when he had confessed so maybe not...).

"Lan Zhan, ah, Lan Zhan..." Wei Ying hunched in on himself, shaking his head and looking miserable behind his hands. "I need everyone to be honest with me because I... I got swept away with my silly stuff and I don't know what's real."

This was it. Their true moment. Wangji could not fail to be heard now. He had to be honest and true to themselves. Show his love and devotion. More than anything else in the world, he wanted Wei Ying to understand, to know and to hear his words. So, he grabbed the hands rubbing his temples with a gentle but warm hold and pulled them away. Golden gaze met silver.

"Wei Ying, I wish to court you."

Light glimmered within his beautiful eyes. The crease between his eyebrows eased up and the anxiety melted away, leaving nothing but hope in its place. Comprehension that he was wanted dawned on him. "Oh..." He swallowed slowly as he worked out the details in his head. "You... You meant it. The first time, too."

Wangji nodded. He was patient. He had always been patient. For Wei Ying. For him to come back. To recognise their feelings. For their love to blossom and grow into an unstoppable, unshakable form, overcoming every obstacle and denying all dangers. However, right now,

Wangji was barely able to hold himself back from surging forward and embracing Wei Ying. He refrained from doing so. Barely. He allowed himself small comforts and reach out to play with his hair, to caress his face.

"I laughed at your face. I did not take you seriously."

"It was noticed." It was impossible not to notice. It was also fortunate that Wangji had two lifetimes to be prepared for any and all responses from his dearest.

"How do you not hate me right now?"

No. That was not possible. He had to hear this. He had to believe this. Wei Ying once died believing Wangji had hated all their lives. He would never let that stand. "I could never hate Wei Ying."

His words were met with a small kiss upon his knuckles. His heart fluttered in his oh-so-small chest.

"I didn't believe you would be interested in me."

"I am." He had always been. He would always be.

"For how long?"

Was he meant to answer that? Honestly? A blush crept all the way up to his ears thinking about the early years of his crush. Of his fantasies of taking Wei Ying in the library when he was being loud, in the classroom as he was being disruptive, in the forest as they were simply traveling together. All the nights his teenage self had endured without a proper release, not understanding the responses and the needs of his body. Mind only ever full of Wei Ying's boisterous laughter and easy companionship. To admit all that; he could do. To admit all that in a room where their family members and close associates were within an earshot... as bold as Wangji had grown, he still had his limits.

His silence must have given him away. Wei Ying gave out an embarrassed exclamation before pushing away from him. Wangji panicked, thinking that he had driven Wei Ying away with his insistent love that had been spread out almost over a decade (though it was much longer if he counted the future-past he had lived). He should have known better. Something like love could not drive him away.

No, but it would push him to feel guilty over it.

Wangji did not like seeing Wei Ying kowtowing and apologising. Not at all. "Forgive this undeserving one, Hanguang-jun. I'm so sorry. I don't even deserve to be in your presence anymore! You should set upon the discipline whip on me. A hundred strikes. No, not even five hundred would be enough!"

Never. The phantom pain of being punished by the discipline whip for standing for justice, for trying to do the right thing had his backache as if he had just been through it. The dreadful ordeal of going through the punishment while knowing that he could not protect Wei Ying

haunted him. He did not dare imagine that punishment for anyone let alone him. His voice cracked as he said, "No strikes. Never."

Wei Ying caught on that he had refrained from fully disclosing his thoughts but he did not press. "I didn't think. I didn't understand. I hurt you, Lan Zhan."

He didn't get a chance to correct him as Jiang Wanyin interrupted their talk and Jiang Yanli put a stop to the ensuing argument. Lost in his own thoughts, trying hard to keep the flashbacks of a terrible future he could not allow to pass and worrying deeply over the upcoming future, Wangji did not notice Wei Ying approach him until his forearms were grabbed and his hand was guided towards Wei Ying's beating heart, in tandem with his own. It was such a simple touch. Yet, it meant everything to Wangji.

"Okay," Wei Ying said, barely audible, "okay, yeah. I wish to court you, too, Lan-er-gege. I won't let you go even if you claim it to be a prank. No way. I won't accept it. You hear me? I like you. I wish to be with you. Wherever and whenever."

He had longed to hear those words. Once more, in a similar manner, they had been uttered and they had been no less important. Now, confessed, out in the open, their weight threatened to squeeze Wangji's heart until it exploded in a blissful end.

The smile he had grown as he spoke, "Mn. Not a prank. It was never a prank. I like Wei Ying. I wish to be with Wei Ying. Wherever and whenever."

To see his love reflected in Wei Ying's blunt words, his flustered expression and his shy posture, meant everything to Wangji. The hands tightly clasped in his were slightly shaky. Excitement and expectations were evident in the way he stole glances at Wangji as they were congratulated by their family. He did not listen as they chatted among themselves until Wei Ying stole his attention once more.

"Lan Zhan, you know you are disqualified, right? I win by default!"

"What does Wei Ying want?"

He made a show of thinking. When he narrowed his eyes and a smug smile settled on his face, Wangji knew what was coming. "I'll gift my reward to you, Lan-er-gege. I won at getting the word around but you beat me fair and square in every other aspect. What do you want for your prize?"

"No need. I already got Wei Ying." To demonstrate it for others to see, he moved over until his future-husband was within his embrace. Wei Ying fit perfectly within his arms as one circled around his shoulder and their foreheads leaned on each other. Wei Ying held on, too. Wangji's cheek and chest kept being caressed subtly. This soothing motion helped calm his madly beating heart. It was the right kind of peace that he had missed dearly.

"A good morning kiss?"

Wangji could answer with only, "Mn."

When their mouths met, it felt like a warm welcoming home. The anxious clutches around his heart eased with each instant passing in which Wei Ying held onto him, the soft touch and slide of their lips grounding him at the moment. He couldn't help but deepen the kiss. Wei Ying tasted of the kind of sweetness he had been searching for all his life. Biting into those lips and hearing the low unconscious humming resonating deep in his throat urged Wangji to push for more, grab his dearest and claim him in a thousand different ways. Later. They would have the time for it. Wangji had made sure of it. For now, he settled for licking into Wei Ying's mouth as he eagerly parted his lips for Wangji.

One day, they would look back on these few days with fondness. Once the war was won and everyone they ever wanted to protect was safe, they would have their peace, their family. They would explore and taste each other. Raise their new family. Enjoy the world and night-hunt together as they were always meant to do. Bad things might happen but this time Wangji was prepared to take the world on to keep their peace. And together with Wei Ying, there was nothing that could hold them back from enjoying all that the world offered to them.

Chapter End Notes

--

Then, the 3rd chapter-2nd half commences.

--

Thank you all for your comments and kudos! I hope enjoyed these extra bits. I also have a E-rated treat for you all (I'll edit and upload it soon!)

Hugs n kisses!!!

Extra 2: The Celebration

Chapter Summary

The Sunshot Campaign is won. Wei Wuxian and Lan Wangji decide to celebrate. (E-Rated)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

(Sometime after the third chapter)

"There you are!" Wei Wuxian giggled before throwing his entire weight on his companion's back who had no troubles carrying him. They had just been to the celebrations for their victory, Wei Wuxian had gorged himself on the various excellently cooked food and superb wine, as much as he could that is since he could not remember the last time he had finished eating a full course of a meal. He was tipsy, he was well-fed and most importantly he was warm, engulfed in the strong arms of his beloved husband-to-be. He nuzzled in and feeling cheeky, bit down at the exposed, delicate skin of Lan Zhan's neck.

"Wei Ying!"

He ignored the undignified squeal so unlike the Second Jade of Lan that no one would believe he was capable of making such a sound. Wei Wuxian considered himself blessed for having heard it. Better yet, for having caused it. He tried it again. This time Lan Zhan only groaned. He had already expected it and without mercy, he bodily picked him up right as his jaw unclenched and threw him on a large, exquisitely soft bed.

The LanlingJin had not cut back on the expenses to accommodate their guests. Especially when it was the esteemed Hanguang-jun who had been the strategic genius and led them to victory and the founder of demonic cultivation, one of the Twin Prides of Yunmeng who had led the largest assault on the QishanWen Sect Leader, razing his forces to the ground with his army of the undead. Really, they deserved some comfort and peace after months of sleeping on the hard beds and mostly eating nothing of worth. Truly Wei Wuxian intended to savour this night to its fullest! In actuality, this was Wei Wuxian's room, adjacent to Lan Zhan's. Whoever designated their rooms had put in a lot of effort and thought to pick them. Jiang Cheng had thrown a tantrum at how far away his room was from his brother's but secretly he must have been pleased; no one liked being put near their tents back in the camp anyway.

"Who had readied this room? They even thought of leaving us so many goods!" He wondered as he eyed the small basket with many unmentionables within. Oh, well.

He was about to call Lan Zhan and ask him to bring more wine for him to enjoy but he didn't get the chance. He also didn't get to look around the finely decorated room before Lan Zhan landed atop him. Apparently, his zhiji had other ideas with the softest bed he had ever felt under their prone bodies. His warm hands found Wei Wuxian's cold skin as he parted his robes and his even warmer mouth closed over a particularly sensitive spot on Wei Wuxian's neck. That was sure to leave a mark, he thought with uncontrollable giddiness. It was followed by a softer kiss that trailed down his chest then back up to meet his lips in a searing kiss. They poured their hearts into it. Open mouthed and demanding; slow and intense. Wei Wuxian's world narrowed down to that moment. To his zhiji's hands messaging his waist, kneading the soft skin of his buttocks. To his insistent tongue licking into his mouth, so improper and ungentlemanly that Lan ancestors would blush.

Wei Wuxian barely remembered to tangle his own hands into the dark locks of Lan Zhan's tied up hair. His was already a mess. Held together by a single ribbon, it had been but a fleeting afterthought as it was removed along with the rest of his robes. His zhiji's garbs were another matter altogether. There were four layers to begin with, and while Wei Wuxian was patient enough on a good day, right then was not a time for it.

Lan Zhan disagreed. His wandering hands were caught on his sash and held up by his head. "Stay still."

A part Wei Wuxian wanted to disobey but his curiosity got the better of him. Just as he was wondering what he was up to, Lan Zhan pulled off Wei Wuxian's trousers and undergarments altogether, leaving him exposed and very clearly wanting beneath him.

"Lan Zhan, ah, Lan Zhan. This is not fair." He wiggled his legs which were caught by the calves by large hands. "I want to see you too."

"Mn. Later." The golden eyes spoke of a promise that would leave him first maddened then sated. He found himself nodding. "Good boy."

He felt a shiver down pass through his whole body. It could be because of Lan Zhan's laden-heavy words or his merciless teeth biting into his inner thighs. He couldn't tell. He didn't care. He kept his hands above his head and let this gorgeous man do as he wished. True to his wild demeanour, as if Wei Wuxian had left him deprived of his touch (impossible!), his zhiji kissed down the length of his legs with an open mouth, leaving behind bruises and licking and nibbling them occasionally before retreating once he reached the most sensitive part of his body. He let out a whine as Lan Zhan started the same motions with his other thigh.

He was savouring it, Wei Wuxian realized. As each kiss lingered and his cock jumped at the barest touch of the warm tongue, the esteemed Hanguang-jun was enjoying teasing him in this manner. Torturing a pliant and withering man with his gentle, dare he say loving, touch. His gaze was burning up Wei Wuxian's insides, making him feel a deep yearning he hadn't noticed before.

"Lan Zhan, get on with it!"

"Patience."

It was clear from his motions that Lan Zhan had put some thought into it. Perhaps even fantasized about it dragging this out to whole night. Now, there was a thought!

Wei Wuxian clutched at the pillow just outside his reach, lifting his hips slightly upwards and spread his legs further. Lan Zhan's breathing stuttered, eyes following the taut muscles of his body and focusing on his lower half. When it came to shamelessness, Wei Wuxian did not make a habit of losing to anyone.

"Lan-er-gege, how often do you imagine doing this; Us, together? Me under you like this... Do you think of me during the celebrations, wishing you could bend me over the table and claim me in front of everyone who dares look at me?" He lifted the leg not held by him and dropped it over Lan Zhan's shoulder. Bending it caused the man to stumble forward a little. He caught himself right above Wei Wuxian's hard and reddened cock. "Or is it more like this in your fantasies? With me in your mouth?"

"I thought of it, either way, several times."

Wei Wuxian inhaled sharply, "Lan Wangji!"

"Mn." That was the only response he received before he was engulfed in a heat that had him lifting his hips from the bed. He was pushed back down with a strong push. Not that he noticed it at first. Lost in the burning desire that was Lan Zhan's skilled mouth licking and sucking on his cock, Wei Wuxian was nowhere near being coherent.

"Er-gege, have you... Ah! Have you done this with someone else since you came back to this time? How is it that you are so skilled?"

The heat around his member disappeared as his zhiji pulled back with a wet sound. He licked his reddened lips sensually as if knowing exactly what the sight of the ever-proper Lan Wangji, in his white robes, all dressed up and pretty, doing the filthiest things to Wei Wuxian was edging him even closer to his release. There was defiance and annoyance in his expression. "Only with Wei Ying."

"Well... I meant no offense. You are simply too good at it," he replied. "I mean, is it like a muscle memory or do you just follow your instincts, spurred on by your..." His breathing was laboured and he should probably worry about the predatory look in his zhiji's eyes but his attention swayed to the other's lap as he talked. Unable to resist the urge, he pushed his hand forward and felt the rather large hardness pulsing beneath his fingers. He felt the other stiffen at his touch. Impressive. Even in this, Hanguang-jun was simply impressive. Wei Wuxian had never stood a chance against him. "This is not fair to you, Lan-er-gege. Look how needy you are here. Let this humble one take care of you in return."

"Not yet." His hand was yanked away. In the blink of an eye, a ribbon flew by his eyes. He had removed his white forehead ribbon and his hair was allowed to freely fall around his shoulders. It made him look younger. Less cut of jade and more human. Reachable. Touchable. It made him look soft and pliant up until that same ribbon was used to tie his hands up above him to the bedpost.

Not so upright, after all, he thought lightheadedly; far too pleased with being manhandled.

"Wei Ying will be good for me."

With his hands out of commission and his body full on fire with each word out of his dearest's mouth, he honestly had neither the chance nor the willingness to drag on his inexperienced bedroom act in front of his future husband. He tested his binding. It held fast. No wonder; it was Lan Wangji's forehead ribbon and his skilled hands tying him up. He would remain there as long as Lan Zhan willed it.

Joy and expectations bubbled in him. "If you want me to be good, Er-gege, you'll have to kiss me silly first."

"Mn." With their mouths meeting in another heated kiss, Wei Wuxian melted into the bodily press of his zhiji. His robes were soft and across his body, the cloth rubbed at his bare skin. It was like he was buried under fluttering feathers. He threw his leg over Lan Zhan's waist and pushed at his back with his heel. It brought them impossibly closer. So much so that his cock, trapped in between them, jerked at the friction of the silken robes and rubbed against Lan Zhan's through the many layers. They were going to ruin his pretty clothes if this kept up.

Good.

He rocked his hips with urgent movements until that too was stopped. "Behave."

"Make me."

A growl ripped out of Lan Zhan's throat. His teeth sunk into Wei Wuxian's collarbone eliciting an unrestrained moan, dispersing any and every thought from his mind. Lan Zhan was very good at doing that. He also had been doing it oh-so-very often.

"Lan Zhan. Tonight, I want you to-" He groaned when his zhiji sucked a deep bruise into his neck. "Please!"

"Do what, Wei Ying?" he asked sounding smug, "Leave you bound to the bed throughout all night; wanting and untouched? For the servants to find you desperately clawing at the sheets?"

"Don't you dare!" Wei Wuxian screeched back. Lan Zhan's hooded gaze tracked the bobbing up and down of his throat not yet satisfied with how little it was marked. He traced his fingers past his abdomen, the scar of the brand and reached his erratic pulse. "Why do you only get so verbal in bed?!"

"Tell me."

"Touch me," he groaned out. The simple touch was nowhere enough for him. "Please."

"Mn." Lan Zhan pushed at his thighs, spreading them further with his knees. His free hand found purchase on the slim waist and moved sensually towards his crotch. When he palmed his erection, Wei Wuxian shuddered with need. Lan Zhan liked him vocal. He liked making loud noises. It all worked out incredibly as such (the residents of the nearby tents in the main camp had not been as happy with that fact) and Wei Wuxian let out a loud moan.

"What else?"

"You know better than I do, Lan-er-gege. Haven't you done my poor future-self enough times to know what I like?"

"I want Wei Ying to tell me. To learn it again, together."

"I-" Why was his husband-to-be such a smooth talker while Wei Wuxian was limited to the first few words that came to his mind? Not fair. Wasn't he supposed to be the wicked one? "I like it when-"

"Mn. Keep going." Lan Zhan was encouraging him by petting his shaky legs and kissing his chest.

"...when you take me as you mean it. Like you aren't willing to me let go of me, ever. As if I am the most important thing in your life."

Lan Zhan pulled back. His pupils were blown with lust but a sadness his behind them. "You are, Wei Ying. To me, you are the most important."

Wei Wuxian gazed into his golden eyes. Speechless, he waited as Lan Zhan caressed his cheek and a soft smile blossomed on their faces. "I know," he replied because wasn't that the truth? This man had travelled back in time to find him. To save him and countless others. A paragon of goodness. The selflessness that transcended time itself to reach, to come back to Wei Wuxian. "You are my most important person, as well, Lan Zhan."

"Mn." He leaned down to kiss him again and slowly their previous enthusiasm returned.

"Disrobe!" Wei Wuxian demanded. He got bitten for it. "So cruel. Do you enjoy bullying me?"

He received another bite but this was followed by the sounds of rustling. When Lan Zhan repositioned himself between his legs, he kneeled with his whole, enticing body in view. Wei Wuxian wasn't given more time to drink him in as slick fingers prodded at his entrance with one of his legs up above Lan Zhan's shoulder.

"Good?" he asked. Sometimes he did that. Asking if Wei Wuxian was comfortable with the speed or the progression of their nightly activities as if afraid, he was faking it for his sake. He figured that it was because Lan Zhan had gotten with his future-self after many adventures together and here, they were courting after a few days of childish behaviour that had him doubt if it was alright to move fast and get lost in each other early on. For Wei Wuxian, the answer was 'yes'. No doubt about it. He cared for him. He loved him. He yearned for his touch. He withered away in the absence of Lan Zhan's attention. He looked forward to the night and his future-husbands loving touch that was never wavering nor uncaring.

If Wei Wuxian's hands were free he would have breached himself already. He gave a firm nod and watched with fascination as Lan Zhan's oil covered fingers entered him ever so slowly. He groaned to encourage a rougher and faster treatment. At times, Lan Zhan complied. Other times, he was taken apart slowly and dearly.

Tonight, Lan Zhan was as impatient as he was. The heady atmosphere of the celebrations had gotten to them both, it seemed, as his zhiji twisted and scissored his fingers inside him without further teasing. Wei Wuxian grabbed the bedpost and pushed his body downwards to meet the fastening fingers until Lan Zhan took the hint and removed his hand. A couple of more kisses (and red marks) adorned his calves. Then he positioned Wei Wuxian over his thighs by lifting him by his back, uncaring of the stretching of the ribbon as his body lost all its support from the bed. Only his heels brushed the soft sheets and his shoulders and head leaned on the large pillows. His weight was entirely on Lan Zhan who had no issues arranging his limbs as he wished. Being completely at his mercy, with no chances of wiggling away or contributing, had Wei Wuxian's chest soar with need. It was ever so wonderful to sometimes give all the reigns to his zhiji. He knew he would be cared for deeply.

Once Lan Zhan was assured that his wrists didn't pull any weight, he stretched Wei Wuxian on his cock causing him to gasp. With no means to urge him on, Wei Wuxian chose to get louder to spur him on. It worked. Lan Zhan sheathed himself fully in one swift move. The movement left him shuddering with its force and the next full thrust had him moaning without reserves (had they been in a tent, there would already be curses thrown at the two of them).

"Lan-er-gege!" he called out. The position left him powerless to push back and Lan Zhan took the chance to caress every bit of his skin he could reach. "Move!"

"Mn." As if waiting for those words, Lan Zhan gripped his waist and with pulling him inwards and began thrusting in earnest. He leaned forward to change the angle and Wei Wuxian saw the stars. Mind blacking out, he felt nothing but the sensations that Lan Zhan bestowed upon him. The rapid pace left him a moaning mess. His zhiji grunted calling his name over and over again. He traced over Wei Wuxian's old cuts. His palm rested on the branding scar. Thumb messaging it. Then, he moved all over his body and as if rediscovering Wei Wuxian's mementos, he touched each and every one the scars. His hips kept on moving without respite. They shuddered and moaned together as one.

The pressure built up in Wei Wuxian's belly. It was a fast and hard coming orgasm; he could feel it. Lan Zhan was nowhere near done with him and knowing this, he did not try to last long. He called out once and cummed all over his stomach, squeezing around his zhiji who fucked him relentlessly through it. Legs shaking and breath coming in harsh rasps, he belatedly noticed that he had been put down on the sheets and Lan Zhan was hovering atop his torso, pushing back strands of sweaty hair.

As he was being kissed, Wei Wuxian noticed his hard member jutting into his hip and licked into Lan Zhan's mouth fondly. "Shall I turn around and let you have your way with me?"

"Already doing that," he gasped out.

Wei Wuxian chuckled and was delighted to be placed on his stomach, hands still tied up and ass in the air. He wiggled a bit mischievously and it was no surprise that Lan Zhan wasted no time in entering him again. His zhiji set a brutal pace and Wei Wuxian melted into the mattress, whimpering and mewling with how oversensitive he was. He filled up again and this time when he cummed after a long round of getting taken on his knees, he heard Lan Zhan's harsh grunting. His mind threatened to blackout. Only ever holding on by the beautiful

thrusts of his zhiji, wanting to feel every part of his member and carry it with him until the next time.

"Lan-er-gege," he sang in between grunts. Lan Zhan did not take long and as he bit into his shoulder, he released inside him after two more thrusts.

"Wei Ying, I love you." His voice was thick and tired. Wei Wuxian felt it resonate in his bones.

"I love you, too, Lan Zhan." The response was weak, muffled into the pillows. He had no doubt Lan Zhan had heard him.

They got cleaned up quickly afterwards and settled into the sheets. It was heavenly, the way their softness pushed him into relaxing and Lan Zhan's chest lulled him into sleep. It felt safe, warm and loving in all the best ways.

Chapter End Notes

And, this is the definite final update on this fic. It's been a good journey with this story and I'm glad so many of you enjoyed it as such =D Thank you all for reading, your comments and leaving a kudos!

End Notes

Thank you for reading, your comments and kudos!! It's much appreciated!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!